THE NORWEGIAN FAIRY BOOK

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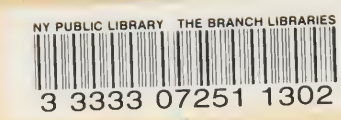

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THE NORWEGIAN FAIRY BOOK

BOOKS IN THE "FAIRY SERIES"

The English Fairy Book
The Welsh Fairy Book
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The Norwegian Fairy Book
The Jewish Fairy Book
The Swedish Fairy Book
The Chinese Fairy Book

"AN OLD WOMAN CAME LIMPING ALONG, AND ASKED HIM WHAT HE HAD IN HIS KNAPSACK.

—*Page 17*

THE NORWEGIAN FAIRY BOOK

EDITED BY

CLARA STROEBE

TRANSLATED BY

FREDERICK H. MARTENS

WITH SIX ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR BY

GEORGE W. HOOD

NEW YORK
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY
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PREFACE

These Norwegian tales of elemental mountain, forest and sea spirits, handed down by hinds and huntsmen, woodchoppers and fisherfolk, men who led a hard and lonely life amid primitive surroundings are, perhaps, among the most fascinating the Scandinavian countries have to offer. Nor are they only meant to delight the child, though this they cannot fail to do. "Grown-ups" also, who take pleasure in a good story, well told, will enjoy the original "Peer Gynt" legend, as it existed before Ibsen gave it more symbolic meanings; and that glowing, beautiful picture of an Avalon of the Northern seas shown in "The Island of Udröst." What could be more human and moving than the tragic "The Player on the Jew's-Harp," or more genuinely entertaining than "The King's Hares"? "The Master-Girl" is a Candida of fairy-land, and the thrill and glamor of black magic and mystery run through such stories as "The Secret Church," "The Comrade," and "Lucky Andrew." In "The Honest Four-Shilling Piece" we have the adventures of a Norse Dick Whittington. "Storm Magic" is one of the most thrilling sea tales, bar none, ever written, and every story included in the volume seems to bring with it the breath of the Norse mountains or the tang of the spindrift on

Northern seas. Much of the charm of the stories lies in the directness and simplicity of their telling; and this quality, which adds so much to their appeal, the translator has endeavored to preserve in its integrity. He cannot but feel that "The Norwegian Fairy Book" has an appeal for one and all, since it is a book in which the mirror of fairy-tale reflects human yearnings and aspirations, human loves, ambitions and disillusionments, in an imaginatively glamored, yet not distorted form. It is his hope and belief that those who may come to know it will derive as much pleasure from its reading as it gave him to put it into English.

FREDERICK H. MARTENS.

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THE NORWEGIAN FAIRY BOOK

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I

PER GYNT

IN the old days there lived in Kvam a marksman by the name of Per Gynt. He was continually in the mountains, where he shot bear and elk, for at that time there were more forests on the Fjäll, and all sorts of beasts dwelt in them. Once, late in the fall, when the cattle had long since been driven down from the mountain pastures, Per Gynt decided to go up on the Fjäll again. With the exception of three dairy-maids, all the herd-folk had already left the mountains. But when Per Gynt reached Hövringalm, where he intended to stay over-night in a herdsman's hut, it already was so dark that he could not see his hand before his eyes. Then the dogs began to bark so violently that he felt quite uneasy. And suddenly his foot struck something, and when he took hold of it, it was cold, and large and slippery. Since he felt certain he had not left the path, he could not imagine what it might be; but he sensed that all was not in order.

"And who are you?" asked Per Gynt, for he noticed that it moved.

"O, I am the crooked one," was the answer. And now Per Gynt knew as much as he had before. So he went along its length, "for sooner or later I will come to the end of it," thought he.

As he went along he again struck against something, and when he felt it, it was again something cold, and large and slippery.

"And who are you?" asked Per Gynt.

"I am the crooked one," was again the answer.

"Well, whether you be crooked or straight, you will have to let me pass," said Per Gynt; for he noticed that he was going around in a circle, and that the crooked one had coiled himself about the herdsman's cottage. At these words the crooked one moved a little to one side, so that Per Gynt could get into the cottage. When he entered he found it as dark inside as it was out; and he stumbled and felt his way along the walls; for he wanted to lay aside his firelock and his hunting-bag. But while he was feeling his way about, he once more noticed the something large, and cold and slippery.

"And who are you now?" cried Per Gynt.

"O, I am the big crooked one," was the answer. And no matter where he took hold or where he set his foot, he could feel the coils of the crooked one laid around him.

"This is a poor place to be in," thought Per Gynt, "for this crooked one is outside and inside; but I will soon put what is wrong to rights." He took

his firelock, went out again, and felt his way along the crooked one until he came to his head.

"And who are you really and truly?" he asked.

"O, I am the big crooked one of Etnedal," said the monster troll. Then Per Gynt did not waste any time, but shot three bullets right through the middle of his head.

"Shoot again!" cried the crooked one. But Per Gynt knew better, for had he shot another time, the bullet would have rebounded and hit him. When this had been done, Per Gynt and his dogs took hold of the great troll, and dragged him out of the hut, so that they might make themselves comfortable there. And meanwhile the hills about rang with laughter and jeers. "Per Gynt pulled hard, but the dogs pulled harder!" rang in his ears.

In the morning Per Gynt went out hunting. When he had made his way far into the Fjäll, he saw a girl driving sheep and goats across a mountain-top. But when he reached the top of the mountain, the girl had vanished, as well as her flock, and all he saw was a great pack of bears.

"Never yet have I seen bears run together in packs," thought Per Gynt. But when he came nearer, they all disappeared save one alone. Then a voice called from a nearby hill:

> "Guard your boar, for understand,
> Per Gynt is without,
> With his firelock in his hand!"

"O, then it is the worse for Per Gynt; but not for

my boar, because Per Gynt did not wash to-day,'' sounded back from the hill. But Per Gynt spat on his hands, and washed them thus, and then shot the bear.

The hills rang with echoing laughter:

''You should have guarded your boar better,'' called one voice.

''I did not think he carried the wash-bowl in his mouth,'' answered the other.

Per Gynt skinned the bear, and buried his body among the bowlders; but the head and skin he took with him. On the way back he met a mountain fox.

''See, my little lamb, how fat you are!'' rang out from one hill. ''Just see how high Per Gynt carries his firelock!'' sounded from another, as Per Gynt shouldered his firelock and shot the fox. Him he also skinned, and took the skin with him, and when he reached the herdsman's hut, he nailed the heads, with jaws wide open, against the outer wall. Then he made a fire and hung a soup kettle over it; but it smoked so terribly he could hardly keep his eyes open, and therefore had to make a loop-hole. Suddenly up came a troll, and thrust his nose through the loop-hole; but his nose was so long that it reached the fireplace.

''Here is my smeller, so take a good look!'' said he.

''Here is a taste of the soup that I cook!'' said Per Gynt, and he poured the whole kettleful of soup over his nose. The troll rushed off lamenting

loudly; but from all the heights around came laughter and derision and calls of:

"Gyri Soupsmeller, Gyri Soupsmeller!"

Thereupon all was quiet for a time; yet before very long the noise and tumult outside began again. Per Gynt looked out, and saw a wagon drawn by bears, the great troll was loaded upon it, and off they went with him up the Fjäll. Suddenly a pail of water was poured down through the chimney, smothering the fire, and Per Gynt sat in the dark. Then laughter and jibes came from every corner, and one voice said: "Now Per Gynt will be no better off than the dairy-maids in the hut at Val!"

Per Gynt once more lit the fire, called his dogs, locked the herdsman's hut, and went on North, toward the hut at Val, in which there were three dairy-maids. After he had covered some distance he saw a fire, as though the whole hut were ablaze, and at the same moment he came across a whole pack of wolves, of whom he shot some and clubbed the others to death. When he reached the hut at Val, he found it pitch dark there, and there was no fire to be seen, far or near. But there were four strangers in the hut, who were frightening the dairy-maids. They were four mountain trolls, and their names were: Gust i Väre, Tron Valfjeldet, Kjöstöl Aabakken, and Rolf Eldförkungen. Gust i Väre stood at the door, on guard, and Per Gynt shot at him, but missed, so he ran away. When Per Gynt entered the room the dairy-maids were well-nigh frightened to death; but when the trolls saw who had

come they began to wail, and told Eldförkungen to make a fire. At the same moment the dogs sprang upon Kjöstöl Aabakken, and threw him head over heels into the hearth, so that the ashes and sparks flew about.

"Have you seen my snakes, Per Gynt?" asked Tron Valfjeldet—for that was what he called the wolves.

"Yes, and now you shall travel the same road your snakes have gone!" cried Per Gynt, and shot him. Then he made an end of Aabakken with the butt-end of his firelock; but Eldförkungen had fled through the chimney. After Per Gynt had done this, he accompanied the dairy-maids back to their village, for they did not venture to stay in the hut any longer.

When Christmas came, Per Gynt once more got under way. He had heard of a farmstead at Dovre, where so many trolls were accustomed to congregate on Christmas Eve, that the people who lived there had to flee, and find places to stay at other farms. This farmstead Per Gynt decided to hunt up; for he thought he would like to see these trolls. He put on torn clothing, and took with him a tame bear which belonged to him, together with an awl, some pitch and some wire. When he had reached the farmstead, he went into the house and asked for shelter.

"May God aid us!" cried the man. "We cannot shelter you, and have to leave the house ourselves, because the place is alive with trolls every Christmas Eve!"

But Per Gynt thought he could manage to clear the house of the trolls. So they told him to stay, and gave him a pig's skin into the bargain. Then the bear lay down behind the hearth, Per took out his awl, his pitch and his wire, and set out to make a single large shoe out of the pig's skin. And he drew a thick rope through it for a lace, so that he could lace the whole shoe together, and besides he had two wagon-spokes for wedges at hand. Suddenly the trolls came along with fiddles and fiddlers, and some of them danced, and others ate of the Christmas dinner that stood on the table, and some fried bacon, and others fried frogs and toads and disgusting things of that kind—the Christmas dinner they had brought along themselves. In the meantime some of them noticed the shoe Per Gynt had made. Since it was evidently intended for a large foot, all the trolls wanted to try it on. When every one of them had thrust in his foot, Per Gynt laced it, forced in a wedge, and then drew the lace so taut that every last one of them was caught and held in the shoe. But now the bear thrust forth his nose, and sniffed the roast.

"Would you like to have some cake, little white cat?" said one of the trolls, and threw a burning hot, roasted frog into the bear's jaws.

"Thump them, Master Bruin!" cried Per Gynt. And the bear grew so angry that he rushed on the trolls, raining blows on every side and scratching them. And Per Gynt hewed into the crowd with his other wagon-spoke as though he meant to break

their skulls. Then the trolls had to make themselves scarce, but Per Gynt remained, and feasted on the Christmas fare all of Christmas week, while for many a long year no more was heard of the trolls.

NOTE

"Per Gynt" (Asbjörnsen, *Norske Huldreeventyr og Folkesagn*, Christiania, 1859, Part II, p. 77. From the vicinity of the Dover mountains. The story was told Asbjörnsen by a bird hunter, whom he accidentally met while hunting reindeer). Like "The Island of Udröst" which follows it, it is distinctively a Northern tale. The bold huntsman of Kvam, whose name and weirdly adventurous experience with the great crooked one of Etnedal, thanks to Ibsen, have been presented in an altogether different, symbolic form, makes his appearance here with all the heartfelt spontaneity of the folk-tale, as it is still recounted, half in pride, half in dread, in the lonely herdsman's huts of the Dovre country.

II

THE ISLE OF UDROST

ONCE upon a time there lived at Vaerö, not far from Röst, a poor fisherman, named Isaac. He had nothing but a boat and a couple of goats, which his wife fed as well as she could with fish leavings, and with the grass she was able to gather on the surrounding hills; but his whole hut was full of hungry children. Yet he was always satisfied with what God sent him. The only thing that worried him was his inability to live at peace with his neighbor. The latter was a rich man, thought himself entitled to far more than such a beggarly fellow as Isaac, and wanted to get him out of the way, in order to take for himself the anchorage before Isaac's hut.

One day Isaac had put out a few miles to sea to fish, when suddenly a dark fog fell, and in a flash such a tremendous storm broke, that he had to throw all his fish overboard in order to lighten ship and save his life. Even then it was very hard to keep the boat afloat; but he steered a careful course between and across the mountainous waves, which seemed ready to swallow him from moment to moment. After he had kept on for five or six hours in this manner, he thought that he ought to touch land somewhere. But time went by, and the storm

and fog grew worse and worse. Then he began to realize that either he was steering out to sea, or that the wind had veered, and at last he made sure the latter was the case; for he sailed on and on without a sight of land. Suddenly he heard a hideous cry from the stern of the boat, and felt certain that it was the *drang,* who was singing his death-song. Then he prayed God to guard his wife and children, for he thought his last hour had come. As he sat there and prayed, he made out something black; but when his boat drew nearer, he noticed that it was only three cormorants, sitting on a piece of drift-wood and—swish! he had passed them. Thus he sailed for a long time, and grew so hungry, so thirsty and so weary that he did not know what to do; for the most part he sat with the rudder in his hand and slept. But all of a sudden the boat ran up on a beach and stopped. Then Isaac opened his eyes. The sun broke through the fog, and shone on a beautiful land. Its hills and mountains were green to their very tops, fields and meadows lay among their slopes, and he seemed to breathe a fragrance of flowers and grass sweeter than any he had ever known before.

"God be praised, now I am safe, for this is Udröst!" said Isaac to himself. Directly ahead of him lay a field of barley, with ears so large and heavy that he had never seen their like, and through the barley-field a narrow path led to a green turf-roofed cottage of clay, that rose above the field, and on the roof of the cottage grazed a white goat with gilded

horns, and an udder as large as that of the largest cow. Before the door sat a little man clad in blue, puffing away at a little pipe. He had a beard so long and so large that it hung far down upon his breast.

"Welcome to Udröst, Isaac!" said the man.

"Good day to you, father," said Isaac, "and do you know me?"

"It might be that I do," said the man. "I suppose you want to stay here overnight?"

"That would suit me very well, father," was Isaac's reply.

"The trouble is with my sons, for they cannot bear the smell of a Christian," answered the man. "Did you meet them?"

"No, I only met three cormorants, who were sitting on a piece of drift-wood and croaking," was Isaac's reply.

"Well, those were my sons," said the man, and emptied his pipe, "and now come into the house, for I think you must be hungry and thirsty."

"I'll take that liberty, father," said Isaac.

When the man opened the door, everything within was so beautiful that Isaac could not get over his admiration. He had never seen anything like it. The table was covered with the finest dishes, bowls of cream, and salmon and game, and liver dumplings with syrup, and cheese as well, and there were whole piles of doughnuts, and there was mead, and everything else that is good. Isaac ate and drank bravely, and yet his plate was never empty; and no matter

how much he drank, his glass was always full. The man neither ate much nor said much; but suddenly they heard a noise and clamor before the house, and the man went out. After a time he returned with his three sons, and Isaac trembled inwardly when they came through the door; but their father must have quieted them, for they were very friendly and amiable, and told Isaac he must use his guest-right, and sit down and drink with them; for Isaac had risen to leave the table, saying he had satisfied his hunger. But he gave in to them, and they drank mead together, and became good friends. And they said that Isaac must go fishing with them, so that he would have something to take with him when he went home.

The first time they put out a great storm was raging. One of the sons sat at the rudder, the second at the bow, and the third in the middle; and Isaac had to work with the bailing-can until he dripped perspiration. They sailed as though they were mad. They never reefed a sail, and when the boat was full of water, they danced on the crests of the waves, and slid down them so that the water in the stern spurted up like a fountain. After a time the storm subsided, and they began to fish. And the sea was so full of fish that they could not even put out an anchor, since mountains of fish were piled up beneath them. The sons of Udröst drew up one fish after another. Isaac knew his business; but he had taken along his own fishing-tackle, and as soon as a fish bit he let go again, and at last he had

caught not a single one. When the boat was filled, they sailed home again to Udröst, and the sons cleaned the fish, and laid them on the stands. Meanwhile Isaac had complained to their father of his poor luck. The man promised that he should do better next time, and gave him a couple of hooks; and the next time they went out to fish, Isaac caught just as many as the others, and when they reached home, he was given three stands of fish as his share.

At length Isaac began to get homesick, and when he was about to leave, the man made him a present of a new fishing-boat, full of meal, and tackle and other useful things. Isaac thanked him repeatedly, and the man invited him to come back when the season opened again, since he himself was going to take a cargo to Bergen, in the second *stevne,*[1] and Isaac could go along and sell his fish there himself. Isaac was more than willing, and asked him what course he should set when he again wanted to reach Udröst. "All you need do is to follow the cormorant when he heads for the open sea, then you will be on the right course," said the man. "Good luck on your way!"

But when Isaac got underway, and looked around, there was no Udröst in sight; far and wide, all around him, he saw no more than the ocean.

When the time came, Isaac sailed to join the man of Udröst's fishing-craft. But such a craft he had never seen before. It was two hails long, so that

[1] A fleet of ships that set sail together from Nordland to Bergen to sell fish.

when the steersman, who was on look-out in the stern, wanted to call out something to the rower, the latter could not hear him. So they had stationed another man in the middle of the ship, close by the mast, who had to relay the steersman's call to the rower, and even he had to shout as loudly as he could in order to make himself heard.

Isaac's share was laid down in the forepart of the boat; and he himself took down the fish from the stands; yet he could not understand how it was that the stands were continually filled with fresh fish, no matter how many he took away, and when he sailed away they were still as full as ever. When he reached Bergen, he sold his fish, and got so much money for them that he was able to buy a new schooner, completely fitted out, and with a cargo to boot, as the man of Udröst had advised him. Late in the evening, when he was about to sail for home, the man came aboard and told him never to forget those who survived his neighbor, for his neighbor himself had died; and then he wished Isaac all possible success and good fortune for his schooner, in advance. "All is well, and all stands firm that towers in the air," said he, and what he meant was that there was one aboard whom none could see, but who would support the mast on his back, if need be.

Since that time fortune was Isaac's friend. And well he knew why this was so, and never forgot to prepare something good for whoever held the winter watch, when the schooner was drawn up on land in the fall. And every Christmas night there was the

glow and shimmer of light, the sound of fiddles and music, of laughter and merriment, and of dancing on the deserted schooner.

NOTE

"The Island of Udröst" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr*, Part I, p 259, from Nordland, narrator not specified) is a legendary paradise, which appears at the moment of extremest peril to the Norsemen helplessly shipwrecked in the stormy sea. The Norsemen, whose fields near the boisterous waves yield but a niggardly return, cannot say too much regarding its lavish fruitfulness and its abiding peace. Udröst is almost an Isle of the Blest, an Avalon, to the fisherfolk whose lives are passed in want and constant danger.

III

THE THREE LEMONS

ONCE upon a time there were three brothers who had lost their parents, and since the latter had left their sons nothing upon which to live, they had to wander out into the world, and seek their fortune. The two older brothers prepared for the journey as well as they were able; but the youngest, whom they called "Mike by the Stove," because he was always sitting behind the stove whittling, they did not want to take with them. So they set out at early dawn; yet for all their hurrying Mike by the Stove reached the king's court as soon as they did. When they got there, they asked to be taken into the king's service. Well, said the king, he really had no work for them to do; but since they were so poor, he would see that they were kept busy; there was always something or other to do in such a big establishment: they could drive nails into the wall, and when they were through, they could pull them out again. And when that was done, they could carry wood and water into the kitchen. Mike by the Stove was quickest at driving his nails into the wall, and pulling them out again, and he had been quick, too, about carrying his wood and water. Therefore his brothers grew jealous, and said he had declared he could obtain the most beautiful princess in twelve

kingdoms for the king—for the king's wife had died and he was a widower. When the king heard this, he told Mike by the Stove he had better do as he had said, else he would have him brought to the block, and his head chopped off.

Mike by the Stove replied that he had neither said nor thought anything of the kind; but that seeing the king was so severe, he would try it. So he took a knapsack full of food and set out. But he had only pushed a little way into the wood before he grew hungry, and thought he would sample the provisions they had given him at the king's castle. When he had sat down in all peace and comfort under a pine-tree by the side of the road, an old woman came limping along, and asked him what he had in his knapsack. "Meat and bacon, granny," said the youth. "If you are hungry, come and share with me!" She thanked him, satisfied her hunger, and then telling him she would do him a favor in turn, limped off into the wood. When Mike by the Stove had eaten his fill, he slung his knapsack across his shoulder once more, and went his way; but he had only gone a short distance before he found a whistle. That would be fine, thought he, to have a whistle, and be able to whistle himself a tune while he traveled, and before long he really succeeded in making it sound. That very moment the wood was alive with dwarfs, all of them asking with one voice: "What are my lord's commands? What are my lord's commands?" Mike by the Stove said he did not know he was their lord; but

if he had any command to give, he would ask them to bring him the fairest princess in twelve kingdoms. That would be easy enough, said the dwarfs; they knew exactly who she was, and they could show him the way; then he himself could go and fetch her, since the dwarfs were powerless to touch her. They showed him the way, and he reached his goal quickly and without trouble, for no one interfered with him. It was a troll's castle, and in it were three beautiful princesses; but when Mike by the Stove stepped in, they acted as though they had lost their wits, ran around like frightened lambs, and finally turned into three lemons that lay on the window-ledge. Mike by the Stove was in despair, and very unhappy because he did not know what to do. But after he had reflected a while, he took the three lemons, and put them in his pocket; because, thought he, he might be glad he had done so should he grow thirsty during his journey, for he had heard that lemons were sour.

After he had traveled a way, he grew very warm and thirsty. There was no water to be found, and he did not know how he was to refresh himself. Then the lemons occurred to him, and he took one and bit into it. But in it sat a princess, visible up to her arms, and cried: "Water, water!" If she could not have some water, said she, she must die. The youth ran about everywhere like mad, looking for water; but there was no water there, and none to be found, and when he returned she was dead.

After he had gone on again a while, he grew still more thirsty, and since he found nothing with which

to refresh himself, he took another lemon and bit into it. And another princess looked out, up to her shoulders, and she was even more beautiful than the first. She cried for water, and said that if she could not have some water she must die on the spot. Mike by the Stove ran about and looked under stones and moss; but he found no water, so this princess also died.

Mike by the Stove thought that things were going from bad to worse, and this was the truth, since the further he went the warmer it grew. The part of the country in which he was traveling was so parched and dried that not a drop of water was to be found, and he was half-dead with thirst. For a long time he hesitated before biting into the last lemon; but at last there was nothing else left to do. When he had bitten into it, a princess looked out: she was the most beautiful in twelve kingdoms, and she cried that if she could have no water, she must die on the spot. Mike by the Stove ran about and looked for water, and this time he met the king's miller, who showed him the way to the mill-pond. When he had come with her to the mill-pond, and had given her water, she came completely out of the lemon. But she had nothing to wear, and Mike by the Stove had to give her his smock. She put it on, and hid in a tree; while he was to go to the castle and bring her clothes, and tell the king he had found her, and how it had all happened.

Meanwhile the cook had come down to the pond to fetch water. When she saw the lovely face that

was reflected in the pond, she thought it was her own, and was so pleased that she began to dance and jump around, because she had grown so beautiful.

"Let the devil fetch the water, I'm far too handsome to bother with it!" said she, and threw away the water-pail. And then she suddenly noticed that the face in the water was that of the princess who sat in the tree. This made her so angry that she pulled her down from the tree, and threw her into the pond. Then she herself put on Mike by the Stove's smock, and climbed into the tree. When the king arrived, and saw the swart, homely kitchen-maid, he grew red and white in turn; but when he heard the people say she was the greatest beauty in twelve kingdoms, he had to believe, willy-nilly, that there was something in it, and he did not want to be unjust to Mike by the Stove, who had taken so much trouble to find her. She might grow more beautiful in time, thought he, if she were adorned with jewels, and dressed in fine clothes, and so he took her home with him. Then they sent for wig-makers and seamstresses, and she was adorned and dressed like a princess; but for all their washing and bedizening, she remained swart and homely. After a while, when the kitchen-maid had to go to the pond to fetch water, she caught a great silver fish in her pail. She carried it up and showed it to the king, who thought it was a beauty; but the homely princess declared it to be the work of witches, and that they were to burn it, for she had noticed at once what it was. So the following morning the fish was burned, and they

found a lump of silver in the ashes. Then the cook went up and told the king, and he thought it very strange; but the princess said it was witchcraft pure and simple, and that they were to bury the silver under the manure-pile. The king did not want to, but she gave him no peace until he consented, and finally said they were to do so. But on the following day a beautiful linden-tree stood where they had buried the lump of silver, and the leaves of the linden-tree glistened like silver, too. When they told the king he thought it remarkable; but the princess said it was no more nor less than witchcraft, and that the linden-tree must be cut down. This the king did not wish done at all; but the princess tormented him so that finally he yielded in this as well. When the maids went out and brought wood for the fire from the linden-tree, it was pure silver. "We need not tell the king and the princess anything about it," said one of them, "for they would only burn it up and melt it down. Let us keep it in the wardrobe instead. It might be very useful to us some day, if some one comes along, and we want to marry." They were all of the same mind, but when they had carried the wood a while, it grew terribly heavy. And when they looked to see why this was, the sticks of wood had turned into a little child, and before long she had become the most beautiful princess imaginable. The maids saw that there was some hocus-pocus about it, gave her clothes, ran off to fetch the youth who had been sent to find the most beautiful princess in twelve kingdoms, and told him their

story. And when Mike by the Stove arrived, the princess explained to him how everything had happened, that the cook had thrown her into the pond, and that she had been the silver fish, the lump of silver, and the linden-tree, and the sticks of wood, and that she was the true princess. It was hard to get at the king, for the swart, homely cook was with him early and late; but at last they decided to tell him that a declaration of war had come from a neighboring monarch, and so they got him out. When he saw the beautiful princess, he fell so deeply in love with her that he wanted to marry her out of hand, and when he heard how badly the swart, homely cook had treated her, the latter was promptly punished. Then they held a wedding that was heard of and talked about in twelve kingdoms.

NOTE

The story of "The Three Lemons" is not a native Scandinavian growth, but of foreign extraction (Asbjörnses, *Norske Folkeeventyr, Ny Samling*, Christiania, 1871, p. 22, No. 66), and is a tale very popular in the Orient. Yet Asbjörnsen heard it from a plain woman in Christiania, which would prove that it had become naturalized in the North.

IV

THE NEIGHBOR UNDERGROUND

ONCE upon a time there was a peasant who lived in Telemarken, and had a big farm; yet he had nothing but bad luck with his cattle, and at last lost his house and holding. He had scarcely anything left, and with the little he had, he bought a bit of land that lay off to one side, far away from the city, in the wildwood and the wilderness. One day, as he was passing through his farm-yard, he met a man.

"Good-day, neighbor!" said the man.

"Good-day," said the peasant, "I thought I was all alone here. Are you a neighbor of mine?"

"You can see my homestead over yonder," said the man. "It is not far from your own." And there lay a farm-holding such as he had never before seen, handsome and prosperous, and in fine condition. Then he knew very well that this must be one of the underground people; yet he had no fear, but invited his neighbor in to drink a glass with him, and the neighbor seemed to enjoy it.

"Listen," said the neighbor, "there is one thing you must do for me as a favor."

"First let me know what it is," said the peasant.

"You must shift your cow-stable, because it is in my way," was the answer he gave the peasant.

"No, I'll not do that," said the peasant. "I put it up only this summer, and the winter is coming on. What am I to do with my cattle then?"

"Well, do as you choose; but if you do not tear it down, you will live to regret it," said his neighbor. And with that he went his way.

The peasant was surprised at this, and did not know what to do. It seemed quite foolish to him to start in to tear down his stable when the long winter night was approaching, and besides, he could not count on help.

One day as he was standing in his stable, he sank through the ground. Down below, in the place to which he had come, everything was unspeakably handsome. There was nothing which was not of gold or of silver. Then the man who had called himself his neighbor came along, and bade him sit down. After a time food was brought in on a silver platter, and mead in a silver jug, and the neighbor invited him to draw up to the table and eat. The peasant did not dare refuse, and sat down at the table; but just as he was about to dip his spoon into the dish, something fell down into his food from above, so that he lost his appetite. "Yes, yes," said the man, "now you can see why we don't like your stable. We can never eat in peace, for as soon as we sit down to a meal, dirt and straw fall down, and no matter how hungry we may be, we lose our appetites and cannot eat. But if you will do me the favor to set up your stable elsewhere, you shall never go short of pasture nor good crops, no matter how old you

may grow to be. But if you won't, you shall know naught but lean years all your life long."

When the peasant heard that, he went right to work pulling down his stable, to put it up again in another place. Yet he could not have worked alone, for at night, when all slept, the building of the new stable went forward just as it did by day, and well he knew his neighbor was helping him.

Nor did he regret it later, for he had enough of feed and corn, and his cattle waxed fat. Once there was a year of scarcity, and feed was so short that he was thinking of selling or slaughtering half his herd. But one morning, when the milk-maid went into the stable, the dog was gone, and with him all the cows and the calves. She began to cry and told the peasant. But he thought to himself, that it was probably his neighbor's doings, who had taken the cattle to pasture. And sure enough, so it was; for toward spring, when the woods grew green, he saw the dog come along, barking and leaping, by the edge of the forest, and after him followed all the cows and calves, and the whole herd was so fat it was a pleasure to look at it.

NOTE

"The Neighbor Underground" (Idem, p. 149, from Halland, told Asbjörnsen by a Hallander whom he met at Björnsjo, fishing) will not surprise the reader who knows the Danish tale of the "Ale of the Trolls." Now and again the underground folk and trolls show themselves to be kind and grateful beings, when their wishes are granted, and when they are not annoyed by obtrusive curiosity.

V

THE SECRET CHURCH

ONCE the schoolmaster of Etnedal was staying in the mountains to fish. He was very fond of reading, and so he always carried one book or another along with him, with which he could lie down, and which he read on holidays, or when the weather forced him to stay in the little fishing-hut. One Sunday morning, as he was lying there reading, it seemed as though he could hear church bells; sometimes they sounded faintly, as though from a great distance; at other times the sound was clear, as though carried by the wind. He listened long and with surprise; and did not trust his ears—for he knew that it was impossible to hear the bells of the parish church so far out among the hills—yet suddenly they sounded quite clearly on his ear. So he laid aside his book, stood up and went out. The sun was shining, the weather was fine, and one group of churchgoers after another passed him in their Sunday clothes, their hymn-books in their hands. A little further on in the forest, where he had never before seen anything but trees and brush, stood an old wooden church. After a time the priest came by, and he was so old and decrepit that his wife and daughter led him. And when they came to the spot where the schoolmaster was standing, they stopped

and invited him to come to church and hear mass. The schoolmaster thought for a moment; but since it occurred to him that it might be amusing to see how these people worshiped God, he said he would go along, if he did not thereby suffer harm. No, no harm should come to him, said they, but rather a blessing. In the church all went forward in a quiet and orderly manner, there were neither dogs nor crying children to disturb the service, and the singing was good—but he could not make out the words. When the priest had been led to the pulpit he delivered what seemed to the listening schoolmaster a really fine and edifying sermon—but one, it appeared to him, of quite a peculiar trend of thought, which he was not always able to follow. Nor did the "Our Father in heaven . . ." sound just right, and the "Deliver us from evil . . ." he did not hear at all. Nor was the name of Jesus uttered; and at the close no blessing was spoken.

When mass had been said, the schoolmaster was invited to the parsonage. He gave the same answer he had already returned, that he would be glad to go if he suffered no harm thereby. And as before, they assured him he would not lose; but rather gain thereby. So he went with them to the parsonage, just such an attractive and well-built parsonage like most in the neighborhood. It had a garden with flowers and apple-trees, with a neat lattice fence around it. They invited him to dinner, and the dinner was well cooked and carefully prepared. As before, he said that he would gladly accept their in-

vitation, if he came to no harm thereby, and was given the same reply. So he ate with them, and said later that he had noticed no difference between this food and the Christian dinner he had received when, once or twice, he had been asked to dinner by the priest of the village church. When he had drunk his coffee, the wife and daughter drew him aside into another room, and the wife complained that her husband had grown so old and decrepit that he could not keep up much longer. Then she began to say that the schoolmaster was such a strong and able man, and finally, that she and her daughter would like to have him for priest, and whether he would not stay and succeed the old father. The schoolmaster objected that he was no scholar. But they insisted that he had more learning than was needed in their case, for they never had any visits from the bishop, nor did the dean ever hold a chapter, for of all such things they knew nothing. When the schoolmaster heard that, he said that even though he had the necessary scholarship, he doubted very much that he had the right vocation, and since this was a most important matter for him and for them, it would be unwise to act too hurriedly, so he would ask for a year to think it over. When he had said that he found himself standing by a pond in the wood, and could see neither church nor parsonage. So he thought the matter was at an end. But a year later, just as the term he had set was up, he was working on a house, for during the school vacation he busied himself either with fishing or carpenter-

ing. He was just straddling a wall when he saw the pastor's daughter, the one whom he had seen in the mountains, coming straight toward him. She asked him if he had thought over the matter. "Yes," said he, "I have thought it over, but I cannot; since I cannot answer for it before God and my own conscience." That very moment the pastor's daughter from underground vanished; but immediately after he cut himself in the knee with the ax in such wise that he remained a cripple for life.

NOTE

"The Secret Church" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr*, I, 217, from Valders, told by a pastor), impresses one with its weirdness, in contrast to the preceding tale of friendly neighborly understanding with the underground folk. In Norway stories are still told of these churches in the wilderness, and of the chiming of their bells, which are supposed to be of evil omen to those who hear them. The idea of the church of ice, in Ibsen's "Brand," may have its root in such folk-tale.

VI

THE COMRADE

ONCE upon a time there was a peasant boy, who dreamed that he would get a princess, from far, far away, and that she was as white as milk, and as red as blood, and so rich that her riches had no end. When he woke, it seemed to him as though she were still standing before him, and she was so beautiful and winning that he could not go on living without her. So he sold all that he had, and went forth to look for her. He wandered far, and at last, in the winter-time, came into a land where the roads all ran in straight lines, and made no turns. After he had wandered straight ahead for full three months, he came to a city. And there a great block of ice lay before the church door, and in the middle of it was a corpse, and the whole congregation spat at it as the people passed by. This surprised the youth, and when the pastor came out of the church, he asked him what it meant. "He was a great evil-doer," replied the pastor, "who has been executed because of his misdeeds, and has been exposed here in shame and derision." "But what did he do?" asked the youth.

"During his mortal life he was a wine-dealer,"

answered the pastor, "and he watered the wine he sold."

This did not strike the youth as being such a terrible crime. "Even if he had to pay for it with his life," said he, "one might now grant him a Christian burial, and let him rest in peace." But the pastor said that this could not be done at all; for people would be needed to break him out of the ice; and money would be needed to buy a grave for him from the church; and the gravedigger would want to be paid for his trouble; and the sexton for tolling the bells; and the cantor for singing; and the pastor himself for the funeral sermon.

"Do you think there is any one who would pay all that money for such an arrant sinner's sake?" inquired the pastor.

"Yes," said the youth. If he could manage to have him buried, he would be willing to pay for the wake out of his own slender purse.

At first the pastor would hear nothing of it; but when the youth returned with two men, and asked him in their presence whether he refused the dead man Christian burial, he ventured no further objections.

So they released the wine-dealer from his block of ice, and laid him in consecrated ground. The bells tolled, and there was singing, and the pastor threw earth on the coffin, and they had a wake at which tears and laughter alternated. But when the youth had paid for the wake, he had but a few shillings left in his pocket. Then he once more set out on his

way; but had not gone far before a man came up behind him, and asked him whether he did not find it tiresome to wander along all alone.

"No," said the youth, he always had something to think about. The man asked whether he did not need a servant.

"No," said the youth, "I am used to serving myself, so I have no need of a servant; and no matter how much I might wish for one, I still would have to do without, since I have no money for his keep and pay."

"Yet you need a servant, as I know better than you do," said the man, "and you need one upon whom you can rely in life and death. But if you do not want me for a servant, then let me be your comrade. I promise that you will not lose thereby, and I will not cost you a shilling. I travel at my own expense, nor need you be put to trouble as regards my food and clothing."

Under these circumstances the youth was glad to have him for a comrade, and they resumed their journey, the man as a rule going in advance and pointing out the way.

After they had wandered long through various lands, over hills and over heaths, they suddenly stood before a wall of rock. The comrade knocked, and begged to be let in. Then the rock opened before them, and after they had gone quite a way into the interior of the hill, a witch came to meet them and offered them a chair. "Be so good as to sit down, for you must be weary!" said she.

"Sit down yourself!" answered the man. Then she had to sit down and remain seated, for the chair had power to hold fast all that approached it. In the meantime they wandered about in the hill, and the comrade kept looking around until he saw a sword that hung above the door. This he wanted to have, and he promised the witch that he would release her from her chair if she would let him have the sword.

"No," she cried, "ask what you will. You can have anything else, but not that, for that is my Three-Sisters Sword!" (There were three sisters to whom the sword belonged in common.) "Then you may sit where you are till the world's end!" said the man. And when she heard that she promised to let him have the sword, if he would release her.

So he took the sword, and went away with it; but he left her sitting there, after all. When they had wandered far, over stony wastes and desolate heaths, they again came to a wall of rock. There the comrade again knocked, and begged to be let in. Just as before, the rock opened, and when they had gone far into the hill, a witch came to meet them with a chair and bade them be seated, "for you must be tired," said she.

"Sit down yourself!" said the comrade. And what had happened to her sister happened to her, she had to seat herself, and could not get up again. In the meantime the youth and his comrade went about in the hill, and the latter opened all the closets and

drawers, until he found what he had been searching for, a ball of golden twine. This he wished to have, and promised he would release her from the chair if she would give it to him. She told him he might have all she possessed; but that she could not give him the ball, since it was her Three-Sisters Ball. But when she heard that she would have to sit in the chair till the Day of Judgment, she changed her mind. Then the comrade took the ball, and in spite of it left her sitting where she was. Then they wandered for many a day through wood and heath, until they came to a wall of rock. All happened as it had twice before, the comrade knocked, the hill opened, and inside a witch came to meet them with a chair, and bade them sit down. The two had gone through many rooms before the comrade spied an old hat hanging on a hook behind the door. The hat he must have, but the old witch would not part with it, since it was her Three-Sisters Hat, and if she gave it away she would be thoroughly unhappy. But when she heard that she would have to sit there until the Day of Judgment if she did not give up the hat, she at last agreed to do so. The comrade took the hat, and then told her to keep on sitting where she sat, like her sisters.

At length they came to a river. There the comrade took the ball of golden twine and flung it against the hill on the other side of the river with such force that it bounded back. And when it had flown back and forth several times, there stood a bridge, and when they had reached the other side, the comrade

told the youth to wind up the golden twine again as swiftly as possible, "for if we do not take it away quickly, the three witches will cross and tear us to pieces." The youth wound as quickly as he could, and just as he was at the last thread, the witches rushed up, hissing, flung themselves into the water so that the foam splashed high, and snatched at the end of the thread. But they could not grasp it, and drowned in the river.

After they had again wandered on for a few days, the comrade said: "Now we will soon reach the castle in which she lives, the princess of whom you dreamed, and when we reach it, you must go to the castle and tell the king what you dreamed, and your journey's aim." When they got there, the youth did as he was told, and was very well received. He was given a room for himself, and one for his servant, and when it was time to eat, he was invited to the king's own table. When he saw the princess, he recognized her at once as the vision of his dream. He told her, too, why he was there, and she replied that she liked him quite well, and would gladly take him, but first he must undergo three tests. When they had eaten, she gave him a pair of gold shears and said: "The first test is that you take these shears and keep them, and give them back to me tomorrow noon. That is not a very severe test," she said, and smiled, "but, if you cannot stand it, you must die, as the law demands, and you will be in the same case as the suitors whose bones you may see lying without the castle gate."

"That is no great feat," thought the youth to himself. But the princess was so merry and active, and so full of fun and nonsense, that he thought neither of the shears nor of himself, and while they were laughing and joking, she secretly robbed him of the shears without his noticing it. When he came to his room in the evening, and told what had occurred, and what the princess had said to him, and about the shears which she had given him to guard, his comrade asked: "And have you still the shears?"

The youth looked through all his pockets; but his shears were not there, and he was more than unhappy when he realized that he had lost them.

"Well, well, never mind. I will see whether I can get them back for you," said his comrade, and went down into the stable. There stood an enormous goat which belonged to the princess, and could fly through the air more swiftly than he could walk on level ground. The comrade took the Three-Sisters Sword, gave him a blow between the horns, and asked: "At what time does the princess ride to meet her lover to-night?" The goat bleated, and said he did not dare tell; but when the comrade had given him another thump, he did say that the princess would come at eleven o'clock sharp. Then the comrade put on the Three-Sisters Hat, which made him invisible, and waited for the princess. When she came, she anointed the goat with a salve she carried in a great horn, and cried out: "Up, up! over gable and roof, over land and sea, over hill and dale, to my dearest, who waits for me in the hill!"

As the goat flew upward, the comrade swung himself up in back, and then they were off like the wind through the clouds: it was not a long journey. Suddenly they stood before a wall of rock, she knocked, and then they took their way into the interior of the hill, to the troll who was her dearest. "And now a new suitor has come who wants to win me, sweetheart," said she. "He is young and handsome, but I will have none but you," she went on, and made a great time over the troll. "I have set him a test, and here are the shears that he was to keep and guard. You shall keep them now!" Then both of them laughed as though the youth had already lost his head. "Yes, I will keep them, and take good care of them, and a kiss from you shall pledge the truth, when crows are cawing around the youth!" said the troll; and he laid the shears in an iron chest with three locks. But at the moment he was dropping the shears into the chest, the comrade caught them up. None could see him, for he was wearing the Three-Sisters Hat. So the troll carefully locked the empty chest, and put the key into a hollow double-tooth, where he kept other magic things. "The suitor could hardly find it there," said he.

After midnight the princess set out for home. The comrade swung himself up in back again, and the trip home did not take long.

The following noon the youth was invited to dine at the king's table. But this time the princess kept her nose in the air, and was so haughty and snappish that she hardly condescended to glance in the

youth's direction. But after they had eaten, she looked very solemn, and asked in the sweetest manner: "You probably still have the shears I gave you to take care of yesterday?"

"Yes, here they are," said the youth; and he flung them on the table so that they rang. The princess could not have been more frightened had he thrown the shears in her face. But she tried to make the best of a bad bargain, and said in a sweet voice: "Since you have taken such good care of the shears, you will not find it hard to keep my ball of gold twine for me. I should like to have it back by to-morrow noon; but if you cannot give it to me then, you must die, according to the law." The youth thought it would not be so very hard, and put the ball of gold twine in his pocket. Yet the princess once more began to toy and joke with him, so that he thought neither of himself nor of the ball of gold twine, and while they were in the midst of their merry play she stole the golden ball from him, and then dismissed him.

When he came up into his room, and told what she had said and done, his comrade asked: "And have you still the ball of gold twine?"

"Yes, indeed," said the youth, and thrust his hand into the pocket in which he had placed it. But there was no ball in it, and he fell into such despair that he did not know what to do.

"Do not worry," said his comrade. "I will see whether I cannot get it back for you." He took his sword and his hat, and went to a smith and had him

weld twelve extra pounds of iron to his sword. Then, when he entered the stable, he gave the goat such a blow between the horns with it that he staggered, and asked: "At what time does the princess ride to her dearest to-night?"

"At twelve o'clock sharp," said the goat.

The comrade once more put on his Three-Sisters Hat, and waited until the princess came with the horn of ointment and anointed the goat. Then she repeated what she had already said: "Up, up! over gable and tower, over land and sea, over hill and dale, to my dearest who waits for me in the hill!" And when the goat arose, the comrade swung himself up in back, and off they were like lightning through the air. Soon they had reached the troll-hill, and when she had knocked thrice they passed through the interior of the hill till they met the troll who was her dearest.

"What manner of care did you take of the golden shears I gave you yesterday, my friend?" asked the princess. "The suitor had them, and he gave them back to me."

That was quite impossible, said the troll, for he had locked them up in a chest with three locks, and had thrust the key into his hollow tooth. But when they had unlocked the chest and looked, there were no shears there. Then the princess told him that she had now given him her ball of golden twine.

"Here it is," said she. "I took it away from him again without his having noticed it; but what are we to do if he is a master of such arts?"

The troll could not think of anything to suggest; but after they had reflected a while they hit on the idea of lighting a great fire, and burning the ball of gold twine, for then the suitor could surely not regain it. Yet when she threw it into the flames, the comrade leaped forward and caught it, without being seen, for he was wearing the Three-Sisters Hat. After the princess had stayed a little while she returned home, and again the comrade sat up behind, and the trip home was swiftly and safely made. When the youth was asked to the king's table, the comrade gave him the ball. The princess was still more sharp and disdainful in her remarks than before, and after they had eaten she pinched her lips, and said: "Would it not be possible for me to get my ball of gold twine again, which I gave you yesterday?"

"Yes," said the youth, "you can have it; there it is!" and he flung it on the table with such a thud that the king leaped up in the air with fright.

The princess grew as pale as a corpse; but she made the best of a bad bargain, and said that he had done well. Now there was only one more little test for him to undergo. "If you can bring me what I am thinking about by to-morrow noon, then you may have me and keep me."

The youth felt as though he had been condemned to death; for it seemed altogether impossible for him to know of what the princess was thinking, and still more impossible to bring her the thing in question. And when he came to his room his comrade

could scarcely quiet him. He said he would take the matter in hand, as he had done on the other occasions, and at last the youth grew calmer, and lay down to sleep. In the meantime the comrade went to the smith, and had him weld an additional twenty-four pounds of iron on his sword. When this had been done, he went to the stable, and gave the goat such a smashing blow between the horns that he flew to the other side of the wall.

"At what time does the princess ride to her dearest to-night?" said he.

"At one o'clock sharp," bleated the goat.

When the time came, the comrade was standing in the stable, wearing his Three-Sisters Hat, and after the princess had anointed the goat and spoken her formula, off they went through the air as before, with the comrade sitting in back. But this time he was anything but gentle, and kept giving the princess a cuff here, and a cuff there, until she had received a terrible drubbing. When she reached the wall of rock, she knocked three times, the hill opened, and they flew through it to her dearest.

She complained bitterly to him, and said she would never have thought it possible that the weather could affect one so; it had seemed to her as though some one were flying along with them, beating her and the goat, and her whole body must be covered with black and blue spots, so badly had she been thrashed. And then she told how the suitor had again had the ball of twine. How he had managed to get it, neither she nor the troll could guess.

"But do you know the thought that came to me?" said she. Of course the troll did not.

"Well," said she, "I have told him he is to bring me the thing I am thinking of by to-morrow noon, and that thing is your head. Do you think, dear friend, that he will be able to bring it to me?" and she made a great time over the troll.

"I do not think he can," said the troll, who felt quite sure of himself, and laughed and chortled with pleasure in the most malicious way. For he and the princess were firmly convinced that the youth would be more apt to lose his own head, and be left to the ravens, than that he would be able to bring the princess the head of the troll.

Toward morning the princess wanted to fly home again, but she did not venture to ride alone; the troll must accompany her. He was quite ready to do so, took his goat from the stable—he had one just like that of the princess—and anointed him between the horns. When the troll had mounted, the comrade swung up in back of him, and off they were through the air in the direction of the king's castle. But on the way the comrade beat away lustily at the troll and his goat, and gave him thump after thump, and blow after blow with his sword, until they were flying lower and lower, and at last nearly fell into the sea across which their journey led them. When the troll noticed how stormy the weather was, he accompanied the princess to the castle, and waited outside to make sure that she really came home safely. But the moment when the door closed on the princess, the

comrade hewed off his head, and went up with it to the youth's room.

"Here is the thing of which the princess was thinking," said he. Then everything was in apple-pie order, and when the youth was invited to the king's table and they had eaten, the princess grew as merry as a lark. "Have you, perhaps, the thing of which I was thinking?" "To be sure," said the youth, and he drew forth the head from beneath his coat, and flung it on the table so that the table and all that was on it fell over. The princess looked as though she had come from the grave; yet she could not deny that this was the thing of which she had thought, and now she had to take the youth, as she had promised. So the wedding was celebrated, and there was great joy throughout the kingdom.

But the comrade took the youth aside, and said that on their wedding-night he might close his eyes and pretend to sleep, but that, if he loved his life, and followed his advice, he would not sleep a wink until the princess was freed from her troll-skin. He must whip it off with nine new switches of birch-wood, and strip it off with three milk-baths beside; first he must scrub it off in a tub of year-old whey, then he must rub it off in a tub of sour milk, and finally, he must sponge it off in a tub of sweet milk. He had laid the birch switches beneath the bed, and had stood the tubs of milk in the corner; all was prepared. The youth promised to follow his advice, and do as he had told him. When night came, and he

lay in his bed, the princess raised herself on her elbows, to see if he were really asleep, and she tickled him under the nose; but he was sleeping quite soundly. Then she pulled his hair and his beard. But it seemed to her that he slept like a log. Then she drew a great butcher's knife out from beneath her pillow, and wanted to cut off his head. But the youth leaped up, struck the knife from her hand, seized her by the hair, whipped her with the switches, and did not stop until not one was left. Thereupon he threw her into the tub of whey, and then he saw what sort of creature she really was, for her whole body was coal-black. But when he had scrubbed her in the whey, and rubbed her in the sour milk, and sponged her in the sweet milk, the troll-skin had altogether disappeared, and she was lovelier than she had ever been before.

On the following day the comrade said that now they must get on their way. The youth was ready to set forth, and the princess, too, for her dower had long since been made ready. During the night the comrade had brought all the gold and silver, and all the valuables which the troll had left in the hill to the castle, and when they wanted to start in the morning, the castle court-yard was so full they could scarcely get through. The dower supplied by the troll was worth more than the king's whole country, and they did not know how they were to take it home. But the comrade found a way out of the difficulty. The troll had also left six goats who could fly through the air. These he loaded so heav-

ily with gold and silver that they had to walk on the ground, and were not strong enough to rise into the air; and what the goats could not carry, had to be left at the castle. Thus they traveled for a long time, but at last the goats grew so weary and wretched that they could go no further. The youth and the princess did not know what to do; but when the comrade saw that they could not move from the spot, he took the whole treasure on his back, topped it with the goats, and carried it all until they were no more than half a mile from the youth's home. Then the comrade said: "Now I must part from you, for I can stay with you no longer." But the youth would not hear of parting, and would not let him go at any price.

So he went along another half mile, but further than that he could not go, and when the youth pressed him, and insisted that he come home with him, and stay there; or that he at least celebrate their home-coming, he merely said no, he could not do so. Then the youth asked him what he wished in the way of payment for his company and aid. "If I am to wish for something, then I would like to have half of all that you may gain in the course of the next five years," said his comrade. And this was promised him.

Now when the comrade had gone, the youth hid all his treasure, and went straight home. And there they celebrated a home-coming feast that was talked about in seven kingdoms; and when that was over they spent the whole winter going back and forth

with the goats, and his father's twelve horses, bringing all the gold and silver home.

After five years the comrade came again and asked for his share. Then the man divided all his possessions into two equal parts.

"Yet there is one thing you have not divided," said the comrade.

"What could that be?" asked the man. "I thought I had divided everything."

"You have been blessed with a child," said the comrade, "and that you must also divide into two equal parts."

Yes, such was really the case. Then he took up his sword, but when he raised it and was about to divide the child, his comrade seized the point of the sword so that he could not strike.

"Are you not happy, since you need not strike?" said he.

"Yes, indeed, I never was happier," said the man.

"That is how happy I was when you delivered me out of the block of ice," said the comrade. "Keep all you have: I need nothing, for I am a disembodied spirit." And he told him he was the wine-dealer who had lain in the block of ice before the church door, spat upon by all; and that he had become his comrade, and had aided him, because the youth had sacrificed all he had in order that he might have peace, and a burial in consecrated ground. He had been permitted to accompany him for the space of a year, and the time had run out when he had first parted with him. Now he had once

more been allowed to visit him; yet on this occasion he would have to part for all time, for the bells of heaven were calling him.

NOTE

In no event originally Norse, but thousands of years old, current in many lands, and even recounted in the book of Tobias—though in other words—is the story of the grateful dead man, "The Comrade." (Asbjörnsen, N.F.D., No. 100, p. 201. From Aadal, together with variants from Valders and Aamot.)

VII

ASPENCLOG

ASPENCLOG'S mother was an aspen-tree. He slew the man who had chopped her down. Then he went to the king and asked whether he could give him work. He wanted no other pay than the right to give the king three good thumps on the back when there was no more work for him to do. The king agreed to this condition, for he thought he would always have enough work for him to do. Then he sent him to the forest to gather wood. But Aspenclog piled up such a tremendous load that two horses could not pull the wagon. So he took two polar bears, harnessed them to the wagon, drove it home, and left the bears in the stable, where they ate up all the king's cattle.

Then he was told to keep a mill grinding which the evil one often brought to a stop. No sooner had Aspenclog commenced to grind than, sure enough, the mill stopped. Aspenclog took a candle and made a search. No doubt of it, the evil one had wedged his leg between the mill-stones. No sooner had Aspenclog seen the leg, than he chopped it off with his club. Then the evil one came hobbling up on one leg, and begged fearfully and tearfully for the leg he had lost. No, he could not have it, said the youth, unless he gave him a bushel of money

for it. But when the evil one had to pay Aspenclog the money, he thought to cheat him, and said that they would wager bushel against bushel, as to which of them could throw the highest. They argued a while about which was to throw first. At last Aspenclog had to begin. Now the evil one had a ball with which they were to throw. Aspenclog stood a long time looking at the moon. "Why do you do that?" asked the evil one. "Well, I would like to see whether I cannot throw the ball into the moon," said Aspenclog. "Do you see those black spots? Those are the balls I have already thrown up into the moon." Then the evil one was afraid of losing his ball, and he did not dare to let Aspenclog throw.

So they wagered bushel against bushel as to which one of them could blow the highest note. "You may blow first," said Aspenclog. "No, you!" Finally it was decided that Aspenclog should blow first. Then he went to a hill, took an enormous fir-tree and wound it around his horn like a reed. "Why do you do that?" asked the evil one. "Well, if I don't, the horn will burst when I blow it," was Aspenclog's answer. Now the evil one began to get frightened, and Aspenclog came home with half a ton of money.

But soon the king had no corn left to grind. And war broke out in the land. "Now he will have work enough to last him a lifetime," thought the king. And he told Aspenclog to go out against the enemy. Aspenclog was quite ready to do so; but wanted to have plenty of provisions to take with him. Then

he set forth, and when he saw the enemy he sat down to eat. The enemy shot at him as hard as they could, but their bullets did not touch him. When Aspenclog had satisfied his hunger, he stood up, tore out an enormous oak by the roots, and lay about him with it. Before very long he had hewn down all of the enemy. Then he went back home to the king.

"Have you any more work for me?" he asked. "No, now I have no work left," said the king. "Then I will give you three good thumps on the back," said Aspenclog. The king begged permission to bolster himself up with pillows. "Yes, take as many as you want," said Aspenclog. Then he thumped, and at his first thump the king burst into pieces.

NOTE

"Aspenclog" (Kristoffer Janson, *Folkeeventyr, uppskrivene i Sandcherad*, Christiania, 1878, No. 8, p. 29) is a giant related to Murmur Goose-Egg, of whom we have still to hear. The laconic account of his origin is one of the beliefs of primitive peoples: that the first human beings were descended from trees, and the *Voluspa* even calls the first two human beings Aspen and Elm (Ask and Embla). Aspenclog is one of these mysterious tree-people.

VIII

THE TROLL WEDDING

ONE summer, a long, long time ago, the folk of Melbustad went up to the hill pastures with their herd. But they had been there only a short time when the cattle began to grow so restless that it was impossible to keep them in order. A number of different maidens tried to manage them, but without avail; until one came who was betrothed, and whose betrothal had but recently been celebrated. Then the cattle suddenly quieted down, and were easy to handle. So the maiden remained alone in the hills with no other company than a dog. And one afternoon as she sat in the hut, it seemed to her that her sweetheart came, sat down beside her, and began to talk about their getting married at once. But she sat still and made no reply, for she noticed a strangeness about him. By and by, more and more people came in, and they began to cover the table with silverware, and bring on dishes, and the bridesmaids brought the bridal crown, and the ornaments, and a handsome bridal gown, and they dressed her, and put the crown on her head, as was the custom in those days, and they put rings on her hands.

And it seemed to her as though she knew all the people who were there; they were the women of the village, and the girls of her own age. But the dog

was well aware that there was something uncanny about it all. He made his way down to Melbustad in flying leaps, and howled and barked in the most lamentable manner, and gave the people no rest until they followed him. The young fellow who was to marry the girl took his gun, and climbed the hills; and when he drew near, there stood a number of horses around the hut, saddled and bridled. He crept up to the hut, looked through a loop-hole in the wall, and saw a whole company sitting together inside. It was quite evident that they were trolls, the people from underground, and therefore he discharged his gun over the roof. At that moment the doors flew open, and a number of balls of gray yarn, one larger than the other, came shooting out about his legs. When he went in, there sat the maiden in her bridal finery, and nothing was missing but the ring on her little finger, then all would have been complete.

"In heaven's name, what has happened here?" he asked, as he looked around. All the silverware was still on the table, but all the tasty dishes had turned to moss and toadstools, and frogs and toads and the like.

"What does it all mean?" said he. "You are sitting here in all your glory, just like a bride?"

"How can you ask me?" answered the maiden. "You have been sitting here yourself, and talking about our wedding the whole afternoon!"

"No, I have just come," said he. "It must have been some one else who had taken my shape!"

Then she gradually came to her senses; but not until long afterward was she altogether herself, and she told how she had firmly believed that her sweetheart himself, and all their friends and relatives had been there. He took her straight back to the village with him, and so that they need fear no such deviltry in the future, they celebrated their wedding while she was still clad in the bridal outfit of the underground folk. The crown and all the ornaments were hung up in Melbustad and it is said that they hang there to this very day.

NOTE

Black jugglery and deception are practiced upon the poor dairymaid in "The Troll Wedding" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr*, I, p. 50. From Hadeland, told by a *Signekjarring*, a kind of wise woman or herb doctress). Characteristic is the belief that troll magic and witchery may be nullified if a gun be fired over the place where it is supposed to be taking place. Then all reverts to its original form. Curious, also, is the belief that trolls like to turn into skeins of yarn when disturbed, and then roll swiftly away.

IX

THE HAT OF THE *HULDRES*

ONCE upon a time there was a big wedding at a certain farmstead, and a certain cottager was on his way to the wedding-feast. As he chanced to cross a field, he found a milk-strainer, such as are usually made of cows' tails, and looking just like an old brown rag. He picked it up, for he thought it could be washed, and then he would give it to his wife for a dish-rag. But when he came to the house where they were celebrating the wedding, it seemed as though no one saw him. The bride and groom nodded to the rest of the guests, they spoke to them and poured for them; but he got neither greeting nor drink. Then the chief cook came and asked the other folk to sit down to the table; but he was not asked, nor did he get anything to eat. For he did not care to sit down of his own accord when no one had asked him. At last he grew angry and thought: "I might as well go home, for not a soul pays a bit of attention to me here." When he reached home, he said: "Good evening, here I am back again."

"For heaven's sake, are you back again?" asked his wife.

"Yes, there was no one there who paid any attention to me, or even so much as looked at me," said the man, "and when people show me so little con-

sideration, it seems as though I have nothing to look for there."

"But where are you? I can hear you, but I cannot see you!" cried his wife.

The man was invisible, for what he had found was a *huldre* hat.

"What are you talking about? Can't you see me? Have you lost your wits?" asked the man. "There is an old hair strainer for you. I found it outside on the ground," said he, and he threw it on the bench. And then his wife saw him; but at the same moment the hat of the *huldres* disappeared, for he should only have loaned it, not given it away. Now the man saw how everything had come about, and went back to the wedding-feast. And this time he was received in right friendly fashion, and was asked to drink, and to seat himself at the table.

NOTE

A favorite jewel among the treasures of the underground world plays the leading part of the tale: "The Hat of the *Huldres*" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr*, I, p. 157; from the vicinity of Eidsvold, told by an old peasant woman). Often appearing in legend proper as the tarn-cap, it here finds a more humble place in everyday life, neither ennobled by legendary dignity, nor diversified by the rich incident of fairy-tale. The entertaining picture here afforded of its powers shows them all the more clearly.

X

THE CHILD OF MARY

FAR, far from here, in a great forest, there once lived a poor couple. Heaven blessed them with a charming little daughter; but they were so poor they did not know how they were going to get her christened. So her father had to go forth to see whether he could not find a god-father to pay for the child's christening. All day long he went from one to another; but no one wanted to be the god-father. Toward evening, as he was going home, he met a very lovely lady, who wore the most splendid clothes, and seemed most kind and friendly, and she offered to see that the child was christened, if she might be allowed to keep it afterward. The man replied that first he must ask his wife. But when he reached home and asked her she gave him a flat "no." The following day the man set out again; but no one wanted to be the god-father if he had to pay for the christening himself, and no matter how hard the man begged, it was all of no avail. When he went home that evening, he again met the lovely lady, who looked so gentle, and she made him the same offer as before. The man again told his wife what had happened to him, and added that if he could not find a god-father for his child the following day, they would probably have to let the lady take her, since she

seemed to be so kind and friendly. The man then went out for the third time, and found no god-father that day. And so, when he once more met the friendly lady in the evening, he promised to let her have the child, if she would see that it was baptized. The following morning the lady came to the man's hut, and with her two other men. She then took the child and went to church with it, and it was baptized. Then she took it with her, and the little girl remained with her for several years, and her foster-mother was always good and kind to her.

Now when the girl had grown old enough to make distinctions, and had acquired some sense, it chanced that her foster-mother once wished to take a journey. "You may go into any room you wish," she said to the girl, "only you are not to go into these three rooms," and then she set out on her journey. But the girl could not resist opening the door to the one room a little way—and swish! out flew a star. When her foster-mother came home, she was much grieved to find that the star had flown out, and was so annoyed with her foster-child that she threatened to send her away. But the girl pleaded and cried, until at last she was allowed to remain.

After a time the foster-mother wanted to take another journey, and she forbade the girl, above all, to go into the two rooms which, as yet, she had not entered. And the girl promised her that this time she would obey her. But when she had been alone for some time, and had had all sorts of thoughts as to what there might be in the second room, she could

no longer resist opening the second door a little way —and swish! out flew the moon. When the foster-mother returned, and saw the moon had slipped out, she again grieved greatly, and told the girl she could keep her no longer, and that now she must go. But when the girl again began to cry bitterly, and pleaded with such grace that it was impossible to deny her, she was once more allowed to remain.

After this the foster-mother wished to take another journey, and she told the girl, who was now more than half-grown, that she must take her request not to go, or even so much as peep into the third room, seriously to heart. But when the foster-mother had been away for some time, and the girl was all alone and bored, she could at last resist no longer. "O," thought she, "how pleasant it would be to take a peep into that third room!" It is true, that at first she thought she would not do it, because of her foster-mother; yet when the thought returned to her, she could not hold back, after all; but decided that she should and must by all means take a peep. So she opened the door the least little bit—and swish! out flew the sun. When the foster-mother then returned, and saw that the sun had flown out, she grieved greatly, and told the girl that now she could positively stay with her no longer. The foster-daughter cried and pleaded even more touchingly than before; but all to no avail. "No, I must now punish you," said the foster-mother. "But you shall have your choice of either becoming the most beautiful of all maidens, without the power

"AND SO HE SAW THE LOVELY MAIDEN WHO WAS SEATED AMONG ITS BRANCHES."

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of speech, or the most homely, yet able to talk. But you must leave this place." The girl said: "Then I would rather be the most beautiful of maidens without the power of speech"—and such she became, but from that time on she was dumb.

Now when the girl had left her foster-mother, and had wandered for a time, she came to a large, large wood, and no matter how far she went she could not reach its end. When evening came, she climbed into a high tree that stood over a spring, and sat down in its branches to sleep. Not far from it stood a king's castle, and early the next morning a serving-maid came from it, to get water from the spring for the prince's tea. And when the serving-maid saw the lovely face in the spring, she thought it was her own. At once she threw down her pail and ran back home holding her head high, and saying: "If I am as beautiful as all that, I am too good to carry water in a pail!" Then another was sent to fetch water, but the same thing happened with her; she, too, came back and said she was far too handsome and too good to go to the spring and fetch water for the prince. Then the prince went himself, for he wanted to see what it all meant. And when he came to the spring, he also saw the picture, and at once looked up into the tree. And so he saw the lovely maiden who was seated among its branches. He coaxed her down, took her back home with him, and nothing would do but that she must be his bride, because she was so beautiful. But his mother, who was still living, objected: "She cannot speak," said she,

"and, maybe, she belongs to the troll-folk." But the prince would not be satisfied until he had won her. When, after a time, heaven bestowed a child upon the queen, the prince set a strong guard about her. But suddenly they all fell asleep, and her foster-mother came, cut the child's little finger, rubbed some of the blood over the mouth and hands of the queen, and said: "Now you shall grieve just as I did when you let the star slip out!" And with that she disappeared with the child. When those whom the prince had set to keep guard opened their eyes again, they thought that the queen had devoured her child, and the old queen wanted to have her burned; but the prince loved her so very tenderly, that after much pleading he succeeded in having her saved from punishment, though only with the greatest difficulty.

When heaven gave her a second child, a guard of twice as many men as had first stood watch was again set about her; yet everything happened as before, only that this time the foster-mother said to her: "Now you shall grieve as I did when you let the moon slip out!" The queen wept and pleaded—for when the foster-mother was there she could speak—but without avail. Now the old queen insisted that she be burned. But the prince once more succeeded in begging her free. When heaven gave her a third child, a three-fold guard was set about her. The foster-mother came while the guard slept, took the child, cut its little finger, and rubbed some of the blood on the queen's mouth. "Now," said she, "you

shall grieve just as I did when you let the sun slip out!'' And now the prince could in no way save her, she was to be and should be burned. But at the very moment when they were leading her to the stake, the foster-mother appeared with all three children; the two older ones she led by the hand, the youngest she carried on her arm. She stepped up to the young queen and said: ''Here are your children, for now I give them back to you. I am the Virgin Mary, and the grief that you have felt is the same grief that I felt aforetimes, when you had let the star, the moon and the sun slip out. Now you have been punished for that which you did, and from now on the power of speech is restored to you!''

The happiness which then filled the prince and princess may be imagined, but cannot be described. They lived happily together ever after, and from that time forward even the prince's mother was very fond of the young queen.

NOTE

"The Child of Mary" (Asbjörnsen, and Moe, N.F.E., p. 34, No. 8, taken from the Bresemann translation [1847]), is a pious fairy-tale, which is also current in Germany; a good fairy often takes the place of the Virgin Mary.

XI

STORM MAGIC

THE cabin-boy had been traveling around all summer long with his captain; but when they began to prepare to set sail in the fall, he grew restless and did not want to go along. The captain liked him, for though he was no more than a boy, he was quite at home on deck, was a big, tall lad, and did not mind lending a hand when need arose; then, too, he did as much work as an able seaman, and was so full of fun that he kept the whole crew in good humor. And so the captain did not like to lose him. But the youth said out and out that he was not minded to take to the blue pond in the fall; though he was willing to stay on board till the ship was loaded and ready to sail. One Sunday, while the crew was ashore, and the captain had gone to a farm-holding near the forest, in order to bargain for small timber and log wood—presumably on his own account—for a deck load, the youth had been left to guard the ship. But you must know that he was a Sunday child, and had found a four-leaf clover; and that was the reason he had the second sight. He could see those who are invisible, but they could not see him.

And as he was sitting there in the forward cabin,

he heard voices within the ship. He peered through a crack, and there were three coal-black crows sitting inside the deck-beams, and they were talking about their husbands. All three were tired of them, and were planning their death. One could see at once that they were witches, who had assumed another form.

"But is it certain that there is no one here who can overhear us?" said one of the crows. And by the way she spoke the cabin-boy knew her for the captain's wife.

"No, you can see there's not," said the others, the wives of the first and second quartermasters. "There is not a soul aboard."

"Well, then I do not mind saying that I know of a good way to get rid of them," said the captain's wife once more, and hopped closer to the two others. "We will turn ourselves into breakers, wash them into the sea, and sink the ship with every man on board."

That pleased the others, and they sat there a long time discussing the day and the fairway. "But is it certain that no one can overhear us?" once more asked the captain's wife.

"You know that such is the case," said the two others.

"Well, there is a counter-spell for what we wish to do, and if it is used, it will go hard with us, for it will cost us nothing less than our lives!"

"What is the counter-spell, sister," asked the wife of the one quartermaster.

"Is it certain that no one is listening to us? It seemed to me as though some one were smoking in the forward cabin."

"But you know we looked in every corner. They just forgot to let the fire go out in the caboose, and that is why there's smoke," said the quartermaster's wife, "so tell away."

"If they buy three cords of birch-wood," said the witch,—"but it must be full measure, and they must not bargain for it—and throw the first cord into the water, billet by billet, when the first breaker strikes, and the second cord, billet by billet, when the second breaker strikes, and the third cord, billet by billet, when the third breaker strikes, then it is all up with us!"

"Yes, that's true, sister, then it is all up with us! Then it is all up with us!" said the wives of the quartermasters; "but there is no one who knows it," they cried, and laughed loudly, and with that they flew out of the hatchway, screaming and croaking like ravens.

When it came time to sail, the cabin-boy would not go along for anything in the world; and all the captain's coaxing, and all his promises were useless, nothing would tempt him to go. At last they asked him whether he were afraid, because fall was at hand, and said he would rather hide behind the stove, hanging to mother's apron strings. No, said the youth, he was not afraid, and they could not say that they had ever seen him show a sign of so landlubberly a thing as fear; and he was willing to prove

it to them, for now he was going along with them, but he made it a condition that three cords of birch-wood were to be bought, full measure, and that on a certain day he was to have command, just as though he himself were the captain. The captain asked what sort of nonsense this might be, and whether he had ever heard of a cabin-boy's being entrusted with the command of a ship. But the boy answered that was all one to him; if they did not care to buy the three cords of birch-wood, and obey him, as though he were captain, for the space of a single day—the captain and crew should know which day it was to be in advance—then he would set foot on the ship no more, and far less would he ever dirty his hands with pitch and tar on her again. The whole thing seemed strange to the captain, yet he finally gave in, because he wanted to have the boy along with him and, no doubt, he also thought that he would come to his senses again when they were once under way. The quartermaster was of the same opinion. "Just let him command all he likes, and if things go wrong with him, we'll help him out," said he. So the birch-wood was bought, full-measure and without haggling, and they set sail.

When the day came on which the cabin-boy was to take command, the weather was fair and quiet; but he drummed up the whole ship's crew, and with the exception of a tiny bit of canvas, had all sails reefed. The captain and crew laughed at him, and said: "That shows the sort of a captain we have now. Don't you want us to reef that last bit of sail

this very minute?'' ''Not yet,'' answered the cabin-boy, ''but before long.''

Suddenly a squall struck them, struck them so heavily that they thought they would capsize, and had they not reefed the sails they would undoubtedly have foundered when the first breaker roared down upon the ship.

The boy ordered them to throw the first cord of birch-wood overboard, billet by billet, one at a time and never two, and he did not let them touch the other two cords. Now they obeyed him to the letter, and did not laugh; but cast out the birch-wood billet by billet. When the last billet fell they heard a groaning, as though some one were wrestling with death, and then the squall had passed.

''Heaven be praised!'' said the crew—and the captain added: ''I am going to let the company know that you saved ship and cargo.''

''That's all very well, but we are not through yet,'' said the boy, ''there is worse to come,'' and he told them to reef every last rag, as well as what had been left of the topsails. The second squall hit them with even greater force than the first, and was so vicious and violent that the whole crew was frightened. While it was at its worst, the boy told them to throw overboard the second cord; and they threw it over billet by billet, and took care not to take any from the third cord. When the last billet fell, they again heard a deep groan, and then all was still. ''Now there will be one more squall, and that will

be the worst," said the boy, and sent every one to his station. There was not a hawser loose on the whole ship.

The last squall hit them with far more force than either of the preceding ones, the ship laid over on her side so that they thought she would not right herself again, and the breaker swept over the deck.

But the boy told them to throw the last cord of wood overboard, billet by billet, and no two billets at once. And when the last billet of wood fell, they heard a deep groaning, as though some one were dying hard, and when all was quiet once more, the whole sea was the color of blood, as far as eye could reach.

When they reached land, the captain and the quartermasters spoke of writing to their wives. "That is something you might just as well let be," said the cabin-boy, "seeing that you no longer have any wives."

"What silly talk is this, young know-it-all! We have no wives?" said the captain. "Or do you happen to have done away with them?" asked the quartermasters.

"No, all of us together did away with them," answered the boy, and told them what he had heard and seen that Sunday afternoon when he was on watch on the ship; while the crew was ashore, and the captain was buying his deckload of wood.

And when they sailed home they learned that their wives had disappeared the day of the storm, and that

since that time no one had seen or heard anything more of them.

NOTE

A weird tale of the sea and of witches is that of "Storm Magic" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr*, I, p. 248. From the vicinity of Christiania, told by a sailor, Rasmus Olsen). In the "Fritjof Legend" the hero has a similar adventure at sea with two witches, who call up a tremendous storm. It would be interesting to know the inner context of the cabin-boy's counter magic, and why it is that the birch-wood, cast into the sea billet by billet, had the power to destroy the witches.

XII

THE FOUR-SHILLING PIECE

ONCE upon a time there was a poor woman, who lived in a wretched hut far away from the village. She had but little to bite and less to burn, so she sent her little boy to the forest to gather wood. He skipped and leaped, and leaped and skipped, in order to keep warm, for it was a cold, gray autumn day, and whenever he had gathered a root or a branch to add to his bundle, he had to slap his arms against his shoulders, for the cold made his hands as red as the whortleberry bushes over which he walked. When he had filled his barrow, and was wandering homeward, he crossed a field of stubble. There he saw lying a jagged white stone. "O, you poor old stone, how white and pale you are! You must be freezing terribly!" said the boy; took off his jacket, and laid it over the stone. And when he came back home with his wood, his mother asked him how it was that he was going around in the autumn cold in his shirt-sleeves. He told her that he had seen a jagged old stone, quite white and pale with the frost, and that he had given it his jacket. "You fool," said the woman, "do you think a stone can freeze? And even if it had chattered with frost, still, charity begins at home. Your clothes cost enough as it is, even when you don't hang them on

the stones out in the field!"—and with that she drove the boy out again to fetch his jacket. When he came to the stone, the stone had turned around, and had raised itself from the ground on one side. "Yes, and I'm sure it is because you have the jacket, poor fellow!" said the boy. But when he looked more closely, there was a chest full of bright silver coins under the stone. "That must be stolen money," thought the boy, "for no one lays money honestly earned under stones in the wood." And he took the chest, and carried it down to the pond nearby, and threw in the whole pile of money. But a four-shilling piece was left swimming on the top of the water. "Well, this one is honest, for whatever is honest will float," said the boy. And he took the four-shilling piece and the jacket home with him. He told his mother what had happened to him, that the stone had turned around, and that he had found a chest full of silver coins, and had thrown it into the pond because it was stolen money. "But a four-shilling piece floated, and that I took along, because it was honest," said the boy. "You are a fool," said the woman—for she was as angry as could be—"if nothing were honest save what floats on the water, there would be but little honesty left in the world. And if the money had been stolen ten times over, still you had found it, and charity begins at home. If you had kept the money, we might have passed the rest of our lives in peace and comfort. But you are a dunderhead and will stay a dunderhead, and I won't be tormented and burdened with you

any longer. Now you must get out and earn your own living."

So the boy had to go out into the wide world, and wandered about far and near looking for service. But wherever he went people found him too small or too weak, and said that they could make no use of him. At last he came to a merchant. There they kept him to work in the kitchen, and he had to fetch wood and water for the cook. When he had been there for some time, the merchant decided to journey to far countries, and asked all his servants what he should buy and bring back home for them. After all had told him what they wanted, came the turn of the little fellow who carried wood and water for the kitchen. He handed him his four-shilling piece. "Well, and what am I to buy for it?" asked the merchant. "It will not be a large purchase." "Buy whatever it will bring, it is honest money, that I know," said the boy. His master promised to do so, and sailed away.

Now when the merchant had discharged his cargo in foreign parts and had reloaded, and had bought what his servants had desired, he went back to his ship, and was about to shove off. Not until then did he remember that the scullion had given him a four-shilling piece, with which to buy him something. "Must I go up to the city again because of this four-shilling piece? One only has one's troubles when one bothers with such truck," thought the merchant. Then along came a woman with a bag on her back. "What have you in your bag, granny?"

asked the merchant. "O, it is only a cat! I can feed her no longer, and so I want to throw her into the sea in order to get rid of her," said the old woman. "The boy told me to buy whatever I could get for the four-shilling piece," said the merchant to himself, and asked the woman whether he could have her cat for four shillings. The woman agreed without delay, and the bargain was closed.

Now when the merchant had sailed on for a while, a terrible storm broke loose, a thunderstorm without an equal, and he drifted and drifted, and did not know where or whither. At last he came to a land where he had never yet been, and went up into the city.

In the tavern which he entered the table was set, and at every place lay a switch, one for each guest. This seemed strange to the merchant, for he could not understand what was to be done with all the switches. Yet he sat down and thought: "I will watch carefully, and see just what the rest do with them, and then I can imitate them." Yes, and when the food came on the table, then he knew why the switches were there: the place was alive with thousands of mice, and all who were sitting at the table had to work and fight and beat about them with their switches, and nothing could be heard but the slapping of the switches, one worse than the other. Sometimes people hit each other in the face, and then they had to take time to say, "Excuse me!"

"Eating is hard work in this country," said the merchant. "How is it the folk here have no cats?"

"Cats?" said the people: they did not know what they were. Then the merchant had the cat that he had bought for the scullion brought, and when the cat went over the table, the mice had to hurry into their holes, and not in the memory of man had the people been able to eat in such comfort. Then they begged and implored the merchant to sell them his cat. At last he said he would let them have her; but he wanted a hundred dollars for her, and this they paid, and thanked him kindly into the bargain.

Then the merchant sailed on, but no sooner had he reached the high seas than he saw the cat sitting at the top of the main-mast. And immediately after another storm and tempest arose, far worse than the first one, and he drifted and drifted, till he came to a land where he had never yet been. Again the merchant went to a tavern, and here, too, the table was covered with switches; but they were much larger and longer than at the place where he had first been. And they were much needed; for there were a good many more mice, and they were twice the size of those he had first seen.

Here he again sold his cat, and this time he received two hundred dollars for her, and that without any haggling. But when he had sailed off and was out at sea a way, there sat the cat up in the mast. And the storm at once began again, and finally he was again driven to a land in which he had never been. Again he turned in at a tavern, and there the table was also covered with switches; but every switch was a yard and a half long, and as thick as

a small broom, and the people told him that they knew of nothing more disagreeable than to sit down to eat, for there were great, ugly rats by the thousand. Only with toil and trouble could one manage to shove a bite of something into one's mouth once in a while, so hard was it to defend oneself against the rats. Then the cat was again brought from the ship, and now the people could eat in peace. They begged and pleaded that the merchant sell them his cat; and for a long time he refused; but at last he promised that they should have her for three hundred dollars. And they paid him, and thanked him, and blessed him into the bargain.

Now when the merchant was out at sea again, he considered how much the boy had gained with the four-shilling piece he had given him. "Well, he shall have some of the money," said the merchant to himself, "but not all of it. For he has to thank me for the cat, which I bought for him, and charity begins at home."

But while the merchant was thinking these thoughts, such a storm and tempest arose that all thought the ship would sink. Then the merchant realized that there was nothing left for him to do but to promise that the boy should have all the money. No sooner had he made his vow, than the weather turned fair, and he had a favoring wind for his journey home. And when he landed, he gave the youth the six hundred dollars and his daughter to boot. For now the scullion was as rich as the merchant himself and richer, and thereafter he lived

in splendor and happiness. And he took in his mother and treated her kindly. "For I do not believe that charity begins at home," said the youth.

NOTE

"The Honest Four-Shilling Piece" (Asbjörnsen and Moe, N.F.E., p. 306, No. 59) stands for the idealization of childish simplicity and honesty, which after much travail, and despite the ill-will of the "experienced," comes into its deserved own.

XIII

THE MAGIC APPLES

ONCE upon a time there was a lad who was better off than all the others. He was never short of money, for he had a purse which was never empty. He never was short of food, for he had a table-cloth on which, as soon as he spread it, he found all he wanted to eat and drink. And, besides, he had a magic wishing cap. When he put it on he could wish himself wherever he wanted, and there he would be that very moment.

There was only one thing that he lacked: he had no wife, and he was gradually coming into the years when it would be necessary for him to make haste.

As he was walking sadly along one fine day, it occurred to him to wish himself where he would find the most beautiful princess in the world. No sooner had he thought of it than he was there. And it was a land which he had never yet seen, and a city in which he had never yet been. And the king had a daughter, so handsome that he had never yet beheld her like, and he wanted to have her on the spot. But she would have nothing to do with him, and was very haughty.

Finally he despaired altogether, and was so beside himself that he could no longer be where she was not. So he took his magic cap and wished himself into the

castle. He wanted to say good-by, so he said. And she laid her hand in his. "I wish we were far beyond the end of the world!" said the youth, and there they were. But the king's daughter wept, and begged to be allowed to go home again. He could have all the gold and silver in the castle in return. "I have money enough for myself," said the youth, and he shook his purse so that money just rolled about. He could sit down at the royal table and eat the finest food, and drink the finest wines, said she. "I have enough to eat and drink myself," said the youth. "See, you can sit down at the table," said he, and at once he spread his table-cloth. And there stood a table covered with the best one might wish; and the king himself ate no better.

After they had eaten, the king's daughter said: "O, do look at the handsome apples up there on the tree! If you were really kind, you would fetch me down a couple of them!" The youth was not lazy, and climbed up. But he had forgotten his table-cloth and his purse, and these she took. And while he was shaking down the apples his cap fell off. She at once put it on and wished herself back in her own room, and there she was that minute.

"You might have known it," said the youth to himself, and hurried down the tree. He began to cry and did not know what to do. And as he was sitting there, he sampled the apples which he had thrown down. No sooner had he tried one than he had a strange feeling in his head, and when he looked more closely, he had a pair of horns. "Well,

now it can do me no more harm,'' said he, and calmly went on eating the apples. But suddenly the horns had disappeared, and he was as before. ''Good enough!'' said the youth. And with that he put the apples in his pocket, and set out to search for the king's daughter.

He went from city to city, and sailed from country to country; but it was a long journey, and lasted a year and a day, and even longer.

But one day he got there after all. It was a Sunday, and he found out that the king's daughter was at church. Then he sat himself down with his apples before the church door, and pretended to be a peddler. ''Apples of Damascus! Apples of Damascus!'' he cried. And sure enough, the king's daughter came, and told her maidens to go and see what desirable things the peddler from abroad might have to offer. Yes, he had apples of Damascus. ''What do the apples give one?'' asked the maiden. ''Wisdom and beauty!'' said the peddler, and the maiden bought.

When the king's daughter had eaten of the apples, she had a pair of horns. And then there was such a wailing in the castle that it was pitiful to hear. And the castle was hung with black, and in the whole kingdom proclamation was made from all pulpits that whoever could help the king's daughter should get her, and half the kingdom besides. Then Tom, Dick and Harry, and the best physicians in the country came along. But none of them could help the princess.

But one day a foreign doctor from afar came to court. He was not from their country, he said, and had made the journey purposely just to try his luck here. But he must see the king's daughter alone, said he, and permission was granted him.

The king's daughter recognized him, and grew red and pale in turn. "If I help you now, will you marry me?" asked the youth. Yes, indeed she would. Then he gave her one of the magic apples, and her horns were only half as large as before. "But I cannot do more until I have my cap, and my table-cloth, and my purse back again," said he. So she went and brought him the things. Then he gave her still another magic apple, and now the horns were no more than tiny hornlets. "But now I cannot go on until you have sworn that you will be true to me," said he. And she swore that she would. And after she had eaten the third apple, her forehead was quite smooth again, and she was even more beautiful than in days gone by.

Then there was great joy in the castle. They prepared for the wedding with baking and brewing, and invited people from East and West to come to it. And they ate and drank, and were merry and of good cheer, and if they have not stopped, they are merry and of good cheer to this very day!

NOTE

"The Magic Apples" (*Norske Eventyr og Sægn*, optegnet av Sophus Bugge og Rikard Berge, Christiania, 1909, p. 61) is probably a some-

what original version of one of the cycles of tales in which people acquire asses' ears, long noses, humped backs and other adornments, through eating some enchanted fruit. The British Isles are believed to be the home-land of this tale, and it is thought to have emigrated to Scandinavia by way of France and Germany.

XIV

SELF DID IT

ONCE upon a time there was a mill, in which it was impossible to grind flour, because such strange things kept happening there. But there was a poor woman who was in urgent need of a little meal one evening, and she asked whether they would not allow her to grind a little flour during the night. "For heaven's sake," said the mill-owner, "that is quite impossible! There are ghosts enough in the mill as it is." But the woman said that she must grind a little; for she did not have a pinch of flour in the house with which to make mush, and there was nothing for her children to eat. So at last he allowed her to go to the mill at night and grind some flour. When she came, she lit a fire under a big tar-barrel that was standing there; got the mill going, sat down by the fire, and began to knit. After a time a girl came in and nodded to her. "Good evening!" said she to the woman. "Good evening!" said the woman; kept her seat, and went on knitting. But then the girl who had come in began to pull apart the fire on the hearth. The woman built it up again.

"What is your name?" asked the girl from underground.

"Self is my name," said the woman.

That seemed a curious name to the girl, and she

once more began to pull the fire apart. Then the woman grew angry and began to scold, and built it all up again. Thus they went on for a good while; but at last, while they were in the midst of their pulling apart and building up of the fire, the woman upset the tar-barrel on the girl from underground. Then the latter screamed and ran away, crying:

"Father, father! Self burned me!"

"Nonsense, if self did it, then self must suffer for it!" came the answer from below the hill.

NOTE.

"Self Did It" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr*, I, p. 10. From the vicinity of Sandakar, told by a half-grown boy) belongs to the cycle of the Polyphemus fairy-tales, with a possible glimmer of the old belief that beings low in the mythological scale are most easily controlled by fire.

XV

THE MASTER GIRL

ONCE upon a time there was a king who had several sons; I do not just know how many there were, but the youngest was not content at home, and insisted on going out into the world to seek his fortune. And in the end the king had to give him permission to do so. After he had wandered for a few days, he came to a giant's castle, and took service with the giant. In the morning the giant wanted to go off to herd his goats, and when he started he told the king's son he was to clean the stable in the meantime. "And when you are through with that, you need do nothing more for to-day, for you might as well know that you have come to a kind master," said he. "But you must do what you are told to do conscientiously and, besides, you must not go into any of the rooms that lie behind the one in which you slept last night, else your life will pay the forfeit."

"He surely is a kind master," said the king's son to himself, walked up and down the room, and whistled and sang; for, thought he, there would be plenty of time to clean the stable. "But it would be nice to take a look at the other room, there surely must be something in it that he is alarmed about,

since I am not so much as to take a look,'' thought he, and went into the first room. There hung a kettle, and it was boiling, but the king's son could find no fire beneath it. ''What can there be in it?'' thought he, and dipped in a lock of his hair, and at once the hair grew just like copper. ''That's a fine soup, and whoever tastes it will burn his mouth,'' said the youth, and went into the next room. There hung another kettle that bubbled and boiled; but there was no fire beneath it, either. ''I must try this one, too,'' said the king's son, and again he dipped in a lock of his hair and it grew just like silver. ''We have no such expensive soup at home,'' said the king's son, ''but the main thing is, how does it taste?'' and with that he went into the third room. And there hung still another kettle, a-boiling just like those in the two other rooms, and the king's son wanted to try this one, too. He dipped in a lock of his hair, and it came out like pure gold, and fairly shimmered.

Then the king's son said: ''Better and better! But if he cooks gold here, I wonder what he cooks inside, there?'' And he wanted to see, so he went into the fourth room. Here there was no kettle to be seen; but a maiden sat on a bench who must have been a king's daughter; yet whatever she might be, the king's son had never seen any one so beautiful in all his days. ''Now in heaven's name, what are you doing here?'' asked the maiden. ''I hired myself out here yesterday,'' said the king's son. ''May God be your aid, for it is a fine service you have

chosen!" said she. "O, the master is very friendly," said the king's son. "He has given me no hard work to do to-day. When I have cleaned out the stable, I need do nothing more." "Yes, but how are you going to manage it?" she went on. "If you do as the others have done, then for every shovelful you pitch out, ten fresh shovelfuls will fly in. But I'll tell you how to go about it. You must turn around the shovel, and work with the handle, then everything will fly out by itself."

This he would do, said the king's son; and he sat there with her all day long, for they had soon agreed that they would marry, he and the king's daughter, and in this way his first day in the giant's service did not weary him at all. When evening came on, she told him that now he must clean out the stable before the giant came, and when he got there he thought he would try out her advice, and began to use the shovel as he had seen his father's grooms use it. And sure enough, he had to stop quickly, for after he had worked a little while, he hardly had room in which to stand. Then he did as the king's daughter had told him, turned the shovel around and used the handle. And in a wink the stable was as clean as though it had been scrubbed. When he had finished he went to the room that the giant had assigned him, and walked up and down, whistling and singing. Then the giant came home with his goats. "Have you cleaned out the stable?" he asked. "Yes, indeed, master, it is spick and span," said the king's son. "I'll have to see that," said the giant,

and went into the stable; but it was just as the king's son had said. "You surely have been talking to the Master Girl, for you could not have done that alone," said the giant. "Master Girl? What is a Master Girl?" said the king's son, and pretended to be very stupid. "I'd like to see her, too." "You will see her in plenty of time," said the giant.

The next morning the giant went off again with his goats. And he told the king's son he was to fetch his horse from the pasture, and when he had done this, he might rest: "For you have come to a kind master," said he. "But if you enter one of the rooms which I forbade you entering yesterday, I will tear off your head," he said, and went away with his herd. "Indeed, you are a kind master," said the king's son, "but in spite of it I'd like to have another little talk with the Master Girl, for she is just as much mine as yours," and with that he went in to her. She asked him what work he had to do that day. "O, it is not so bad to-day," said the king's son. "I am only to fetch his horse from the pasture." "And how are you going to manage that?" asked the Master Girl. "Surely it is no great feat to fetch a horse from pasture," said the king's son, "and I have ridden swift horses before." "Yet it is not an easy matter to ride this horse home," said the Master Girl, "but I will tell you how to set about it: When you see the horse, he will come running up, breathing fire and flame, just as though he were a burning pine-torch. Then you must take the bit that is hanging here on the door, and throw it into

his mouth, for then he will grow so tame that you can do what you will with him." He would take good note of it, said the king's son, and he sat there with the Master Girl the whole day long, and they chatted and talked about this and that, but mainly about how delightful it would be, and what a pleasant time they could have, if they could only marry and get away from the giant. And the king's son would have forgotten the pasture and the horse altogether, had not the Master Girl reminded him of them toward evening. He took the bit that hung in the corner, hurried out to the pasture, and the horse at once ran up, breathing fire and flame; but he seized the moment when he came running up to him with his jaws wide open, and threw the bit into his mouth. Then he stood still, as gentle as a young lamb, and he had no trouble bringing him to the stable. Then he went to his room again, and began to whistle and sing. In the evening the giant came home with his goats. "Did you fetch the horse?" he asked. "Yes, master," said the king's son. "It would make a fine saddle-horse, but I just took it straight to the stable." "I'll have to see that," said the giant, and went into the stable. But there stood the horse, just as the king's son had said. "You surely must have spoken to my Master Girl, for you could not have done that alone," said the giant. "Yesterday the master chattered about the Master Girl, and to-day he is talking about her again. I wish master would show me the creature, for I surely would like to see her," said the king's son, and pre-

tended to be very simple and stupid. "You will get to see her in plenty of time," said the giant.

On the third morning the giant went off again with his goats. "To-day you must go to the devil, and fetch me his tribute," said he to the king's son. "When you have done that, you may rest for the remainder of the time, for you have come to a kind master, and you might as well know it," and with that he went off. "You may be a kind master," said the king's son; "yet you hand over some pretty mean jobs to me in spite of it, but I think I'll look after your Master Girl a bit. You claim that she belongs to you, but perhaps, in spite of it, she may tell me what to do," and with that he went in to her. And when the Master Girl asked him what the giant had given him to do that day, he told her he must go to the devil and fetch a tribute. "But how will you go about it?" asked the Master Girl. "You will have to tell me that," said the king's son, "for I have never been to the devil's place, and even though I knew the way there, I still would not know how much to ask for." "I will tell you what you must do," said the Master Girl. "You must go to the rock behind the pasture, and take the club that is lying there, and strike the rock with it. Then one will come out whose eyes flash fire, and you must tell him your business. And if he asks how much you want, you must tell him as much as you can carry." He would take good note of it, said the king's son, and he sat there with the Master Girl all day long until evening, and he might be sitting

there yet, if the Master Girl had not reminded him that he must still go to the devil about the tribute before the giant came home. So he set out, and did exactly as the Master Girl had told him: he went to the rock, took the club and beat against it. Then one came out from whose eyes and nose the sparks flew. "What do you want?" he asked. "The giant has sent me to fetch his tribute," said the king's son. "How much do you want?" the other again inquired. "I never ask for more than I can carry," was the reply of the king's son. "It is lucky for you that you did not ask for a whole ton at once," said the one on the hill. "But come in with me, and wait a while." This the king's son did, and saw a great deal of gold and silver lying in the hill like dead rock in an ore-pile. Then as much as he could carry was packed up, and with it he went his way. When the giant came home in the evening with his goats, the king's son was running about the room, whistling and singing as on the two preceding evenings. "Did you go to the devil for the tribute?" asked the giant. "Yes, indeed, master," said the king's son. "Where did you put it?" asked the giant again. "I stood the sack of gold outside on the bench," was the reply. "I must see that at once," said the giant, and went over to the bench. But the sack was really standing there, and it was so full that the gold and silver rolled right out when the giant loosened the string. "You surely must have spoken to my Master Girl," said the giant. "If that is the case I will tear your head off."

"With your Master Girl?" said the king's son. "Yesterday master talked about that Master Girl, and to-day he is talking about her again, and the day before yesterday he talked about her, too! I only wish that I might get the chance to see her sometime!" said he. "Well, just wait until to-morrow," said the giant, "and then I will lead you to her myself," he said. "A thousand thanks, master," said the king's son, "but I think you are only joking!" The following day the giant took him to the Master Girl.

"Now you must slaughter him, and cook him in the big kettle, you know which one I mean. And when the soup is ready, you can call me," said the giant, and he lay down on the bench to sleep, and at once began to snore so that the hills shook. Then the Master Girl took a knife, and cut the youth's little finger, and let three drops of blood fall on the bench. Then she took all the old rags, and old shoes and other rubbish she could find, and threw them all into the kettle. And then she took a chest of gold-dust, and a lick-stone, and a bottle of water that hung over the door, and a golden apple, and two golden hens, and left the giant's castle together with the king's son as quickly as possible. After a time they came to the sea, and they sailed across; though where they got the ship I do not exactly know.

Now when the giant had been sleeping quite a while, he began to stretch himself on his bench. "Is dinner ready yet?" he asked. "Just begun!" said the first drop of blood on the bench. Then the giant

turned around, went to sleep again, and went on sleeping for quite some time. Then he again turned around a little. "Is dinner not ready yet?" he said, but did not open his eyes—nor had he done so the first time—for he was still half asleep. "It is half ready!" called out the second drop of blood, and then the giant thought it was the Master Girl. He turned around on the bench and took another nap. After he had slept a couple of hours longer, he once more began to move about and stretch: "Is dinner still not ready?" said he. "Ready!" answered the third drop of blood. The giant sat up and rubbed his eyes. But he could not see who had called him, and so he called out to the Master Girl. But no one answered him. "O, I suppose she has gone out for a little," thought the giant, and he dipped his spoon in the kettle to try the dinner; but there was nothing but leather soles and rags and like rubbish cooked together, and he did not know whether it were mush or porridge. When he noticed this he began to see a light, and realize how matters had come to pass, and he grew so angry that he hardly knew what to do, and made after the king's son and the Master Girl in flying haste. In a short time he came to the sea, and could not cross. "But I know how to help myself," said he. "I will fetch my sea-sucker." So the sea-sucker came, and lay down and took two or three swallows, and thus lowered the water so that the giant could see the king's son and the Master Girl out on the ship. "Now you must throw the lick-stone overboard," said the Master Girl, and

the king's son did so. It turned into a tremendous large rock square across the sea, and the giant could not get over, and the sea-sucker could drink up no more of the sea. "I know quite well what I must do," said the giant. "I must now fetch my hill-borer." So the hill-borer came, and bored a hole through the rock, so the sea-sucker could get through and keep on sucking. But no sooner were they thus far than the Master Girl told the king's son to pour a drop or so of the bottle overboard, and the sea grew so full that they had landed before the sea-sucker could so much as take a single swallow.

Now they wanted to go home to the father of the king's son; but he would not hear of the Master Girl's going afoot, since he did not think this fitting for either of them. "Wait here a little while, until I fetch the seven horses that stand in my father's stable," said the king's son. "It is not far, and I will soon be back; for I will not have my bride come marching home afoot." "No, do not do so, for when you get home to the castle you will forget me, I know that positively," said the Master Girl. "How could I forget you?" said the king's son. "We have passed through so many hardships together, and we love each other so dearly," said he. He wanted to fetch the coach and seven horses at all costs, and she was to wait by the seashore. So at last the Master Girl had to give in.

"But when you get there, you must not take time to greet a single person. You must at once go to the stable, harness the horses, and drive back as

swiftly as you can. They will all come to meet you, but you must act as though you did not see them, and must not take a single bite to eat. If you do not do that, you will make both of us unhappy," said she. And he promised to do as she had said.

But when he got home to the castle, one of his brothers was just getting married, and the bride and all the guests were already there. They all crowded around him and asked him this, and asked him that, and wanted to lead him in. But he acted as though he saw none of them, led out the horses, and began to put them to the coach. And since they could by no manner of means induce him to come into the castle, they came out with food and drink, and offered him the best of all that had been prepared for the wedding feast.

But the king's son would taste nothing, and only made haste in order to get away. Yet, finally, the bride's sister rolled an apple over to him across the court-yard: "And if you will touch nothing else, then at least you might take a bite of the apple, for you must be hungry and thirsty after your long journey," said she, and he took the apple and bit into it. But no sooner did he have the bit of apple in his mouth than he had forgotten the Master Girl, and that he was to fetch her. "I think I must be going mad! What am I doing with the horses and the coach?" he said, and he led back the horses into the stable, and went back to the castle, and wanted to marry the bride's sister, the one who had thrown him the apple.

In the meantime the Master Girl sat by the sea-shore, and waited and waited; but no king's son came. Then she went on, and after she had gone a while, she came to a little hut that lay all by itself in the forest, near the king's castle. She went in and asked whether she might not stay there. Now the little hut belonged to an old woman, and she was an arrant and evil witch; at first she did not want to take in the Master Girl at all; but at last she agreed to do so for love of money. But the whole hut was as dark and dirty as a pig-sty; therefore the Master Girl said she would clean up a bit, so that things would look as they did in other, decent people's houses. The old woman would have none of it, and was very disagreeable and angry; but the Master Girl paid no attention to her. She took the chest of gold dust, and threw a handful into the fire, so that a ray of gold shone over the whole hut, and it was gilded outside and in. But when the gold flamed up, the old woman was so terribly frightened that she ran out as though the evil one were after her, and from pure rage she forgot to duck at the threshold, and ran her head against the door-post. And that was the end of her.

The following morning the bailiff came by. He was much surprised to see the little golden hut, glittering and sparkling there in the forest, and was still more surprised at the girl within the hut. He fell in love with her at once, and asked her whether she would not become the bailiff's lady. "Yes, but have you plenty of money?" said the Master Girl,

Yes, he had quite a little, said the bailiff. Then he went home to fetch his money, and came back again at evening dragging along an enormous sack of it, which he stood on a bench before the door. The Master Girl said that, seeing he had so much money, she would accept him. And then she asked him to rake the fire, which she said she had forgotten to do. But as soon as he had the poker in his hand, the Master Girl cried: "May God grant that you hold the poker, and the poker hold you, and that sparks and ashes fly around you until morning!" And there the bailiff stood the whole night through, and sparks and ashes flew about him, nor were the sparks the less hot for all his complaining and begging. And when morning came, and he could let go the poker, he did not stay long; but ran off as though the evil one were at his heels. And those who saw him stared and laughed, for he ran like a madman, and looked as though he had been thrashed and tanned. And all would have liked to have known where he had come from, but he said not a word, for he was ashamed.

On the following day the clerk passed by the Master Girl's little house. He saw it glistening and shining in the woods, and went in to find out who lived there. When he saw the beautiful girl he fell even more deeply in love with her than the bailiff had, and lost no time in suing for her hand. The Master Girl asked him, as she had asked the bailiff, whether he had plenty of money. Money he had to spare, answered the clerk, and ran right home to

fetch it. By evening he was back again with a great sack—it must have been as much again as the bailiff had brought—and stood it on the bench. And so she promised to take him. Then she asked him to shut the house-door, which she said she had forgotten to do. But when he had the door-knob in his hand, she cried: "May God grant that you hold the door-knob and that the door-knob hold you, and that you move back and forth with it all night long until morning!" And the clerk had to dance the whole night through, such a waltz as he had never tripped before, and he had no wish to repeat the experience. Sometimes he was ahead, and sometimes the door was, and so they went back and forth all night, from wall to post and post to wall, and he was nearly bruised to death. First he cursed, then he wailed and pleaded; but the door paid no attention to him, and flung open and shut until it dawned. When it at last released him, he hurried away as quickly as though he had stolen something, forgot his sackful of money, and his wish to marry, and was glad that the door did not come threshing along after him. All grinned and stared at the clerk, for he ran like a madman, and looked worse than if a ram had been butting him all night long.

On the third day the magistrate came by, and also saw the little golden house in the forest. And he, too, went in to see who lived in it. And when he saw the Master Girl, he fell so deeply in love with her that he sued for her hand as soon as he bade her good-day. But she told him just what she had

told the others, that if he had plenty of money she would take him. He had money enough, said the magistrate, and he went straight home to fetch it. When he came back in the evening, he had a much bigger sack of money with him than the clerk had had, and he stood it on the bench. Then the Master Girl said she would take him. But first she asked him to go fetch the calf, which she had forgotten to bring to the stable. And when he had the calf by the tail she cried: "May God grant that you hold the calf's tail, and the calf's tail hold you, and that you fly about the world together until morning!" And with that the race began, over stick and stone, over hill and dale, and the more the magistrate cursed and yelled, the more madly the calf ran away. When it dawned there was hardly a whole bone in the magistrate's body, and he was so happy to be able to let go the calf's tail that he forgot his bag of money, and the whole occurrence. It is true that he went home more slowly than the bailiff and the clerk; but the slower he went the more time the people had to stare and grin at him, so ragged and badly beaten did he appear after his dance with the calf.

On the following day there was to be a wedding at the castle, and not only was the older prince to marry, but the one who had stayed with the giant as well, and he was to get the other bride's sister.

But when they entered the coach and were about to drive to church, one of the axles broke. They took another, and then a third, but all of them broke,

no matter what kind of wood they used. It took a great deal of time, and they did not move from the spot, and got all out of sorts. Then the bailiff said, for he had also been invited to the wedding at the castle, that a maiden lived out in the forest, and "if they could only get the loan of her poker, it would be sure to hold." So they sent to the little house in the forest, and asked most politely whether the maiden would not loan them the poker of which the bailiff had spoken. And they got it, too, and then they had an axle that would not break.

But when they wanted to drive on, the bottom of the coach broke. They made a new bottom as well as they were able, but no matter how they put it together, nor what kind of wood they used, it kept on breaking again as soon as they had left the court-yard. And they were worse off than they had been with the axle. Then the clerk said—for if the bailiff was one of the company, you may be sure they had not forgotten to invite the clerk—"Out in the forest lives a maiden, and if you will get the loan of her house-door, I am sure it would not break." So they sent to the little house in the forest, and asked most politely whether the maiden would not loan them the golden house-door, of which the clerk had told them. And they got it, too, and were about to drive on, when suddenly the horses could not draw the coach. There were six, so they put to eight, and then ten and twelve, but though they put as many as they liked to the coach and helped along with the whip, still the coach would not budge. The day was

already far advanced, and they simply had to get to church, and actually began to despair. But then the magistrate said that out in the golden house in the forest lived a maiden, "and if one could only get the loan of her calf, it would be sure to pull the coach, and though it were as heavy as a bowlder." They did not think it quite the thing to drive to church with a calf; but still there was nothing to do but to send to the maiden, and to ask her most politely, with a kind greeting from the king, if she would loan them the calf of which the magistrate had spoken. Nor did the Master Girl refuse them this time. And then, when they had put the calf to the coach, it moved from the spot quickly enough. It flew over stick and stone, hill and dale, so that the people inside could hardly catch their breath. First it was on the ground, and next it was in the air, and when they reached the church, it spun around it like a top, and they had the greatest difficulty in getting out and into the church. And going home they went still faster, and were nearly out of their wits by the time they reached the castle.

When they sat down to the table the king's son —the same who had been at the giant's—said it would be no more than right to invite the maiden, too, who had lent them the poker, and the door and the calf: "for if we had not had these things, we should not have moved from the spot." This seemed right to the king, so he sent five of his most distinguished courtiers to the little golden house. They were to carry the king's kindest greetings, and ask

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that the maiden come up to the castle and take dinner with them. "A kind greeting to the king, and if he is too good to come to me, then I am too good to go to him," said the Master Girl. So the king had to go to her himself, and then she went along with him at once, and the king saw very well that she was more than she appeared to be, and gave her a place at the head of the table, next to the young bridegroom. After they had been at dinner for a while, the Master Girl produced the rooster and the hen and the golden apple—they were the three things she had taken along from the giant's castle—and placed them on the table before her. At once the rooster and the hen began to fight for the golden apple. "Why, just see how the two fight for the golden apple!" said the king's son. "Yes, that is how we had to fight the time we wanted to get out of the rock!" said the Master Girl. And then the king's son recognized her, and was very happy. The witch who had rolled the apple over to him was duly punished, and then the wedding really began, and the bailiff, and the clerk and the magistrate held out to the very end, for all that their wings had been so thoroughly singed.

NOTE

"The Master Girl" (Asbjörnsen and Moe. N.F.E., p. 222, No. 46) is fitted out with a great wealth of interesting incident. The dream motive of not being able to get away is most delightfully woven into the context of the story, and the sea-sucker, whom the giant fetches to stop the flight of the lovers, is a unique creation of fancy.

XVI

ANENT THE GIANT WHO DID NOT HAVE HIS HEART ABOUT HIM

ONCE upon a time there was a king who had seven sons, and he was so fond of them that he never could bear to have them all away from him at once, and one of them always had to stay with him. When they had grown up, six of them were to go forth and look for wives; but the youngest the king wanted to keep at home, and the others were to bring along a bride for him. The king gave the six the handsomest clothes that had ever been seen, clothes that glittered from afar, and each received a horse that had cost many hundred dollars, and so they set forth. And after they had been at the courts of many kings, and had seen many princesses, they at last came to a king who had six daughters. Such beautiful princesses they had not as yet met with, and so each of them paid court to one of them, and when each had won his sweetheart, they rode back home again. But they were so deeply in love with their brides that they altogether forgot they were also to bring back a princess for their young brother who had stayed at home.

Now when they had already covered a good bit of the homeward road, they passed close to a steep cliff-side where the giants dwelt. And a giant came

out, looked at them, and turned them all to stone, princes and princesses. The king waited and waited for his six sons; but though he waited and yearned, they did not come. Then he grew very sad, and said that he would never really be happy again. "If I did not have you," he told his youngest, "I would not keep on living, so sad am I at having lost your brothers." "But I had already been thinking of asking your permission to set out and find my brothers again," said the youngest. "No, that I will not allow under any circumstances," answered the father, "otherwise you will be lost to me into the bargain." But the youth's mind was set on going, and he pleaded so long that finally the king had to let him have his way. Now the king had only a wretched old nag for him, since the six other princes and their suite had been given all the good horses; but that did not worry the youngest. He mounted the shabby old nag, and "Farewell, father!" he said to the king. "I will surely return, and perhaps I will bring my six brothers back with me." And with that he rode off.

Now when he had ridden a while he met a raven, who was lying in the road beating his wings, and unable to move from the spot because he was so starved. "O, dear friend, if you will give me a bite to eat, then I'll help you in your hour of direst need!" cried the raven. "I have not much food, nor are you likely to be able to help me much," said the king's son, "but still I can give you a little, for it is easy to see you need it." And with that he

gave the raven some of the provisions he had with him. And when he had ridden a while longer, he came to a brook, and there lay a great salmon who had gotten on dry land, and was threshing about, and could not get back into the water. "O, dear friend, help me back into the water," said the salmon to the king's son, "and I will help you, too, in your hour of greatest need!" "The help you will be able to give me will probably not amount to much," said the prince, "but it would be a pity if you had to lie there and pine away." And with that he pushed the fish back into the water. Then he rode on a long, long way, and met a wolf; and the wolf was so starved that he lay in the middle of the road, and writhed with hunger. "Dear friend, let me eat your horse," said the wolf. "My hunger is so great that my very inwards rattle, because I have had nothing to eat for the past two years!" "No," said the prince, "I cannot do that: first I met a raven, and had to give him my provisions; then I met a salmon and had to help him back into the water; and now you want my horse. That will not do, for what shall I ride on then?" "Well, my dear friend, you must help me," was the wolf's reply. "You can ride on me. I will help you in turn in your hour of greatest need." "The help you might give me would probably not amount to much; but I will let you eat the horse, since you are in such sorry case," returned the prince. And when the wolf had eaten the horse, the prince took the bit and put it in the wolf's mouth, and fastened the saddle on his back,

and his meal had made the wolf so strong that he trotted off with the king's son as fast as he could. He had never ridden so swiftly before. "When we have gone a little further I will show you the place where the giants live," said the wolf; and in a short time they were there. "Well, this is where the giants live," said the wolf. "There you see your six brothers, whom the giant turned into stone, and yonder are their six brides; and up there is the door through which you must pass." "No, I would not dare do that," said the king's son. "He would murder me." "O no," was the wolf's reply, "when you go in you will find a princess, and she will tell you how to set about getting rid of the giant. You need only do as she says." And the prince went in, though he was afraid. When he entered the house the giant was not there; but in one of the rooms sat a princess, just as the wolf had said, and such a beautiful maiden the youth had never seen. "Now may God help you, how did you get in here?" cried the princess, when she saw him. "It is certain death for you. No one can kill the giant who lives here, for he hasn't his heart about him."

"Well, since I do happen to be here, I will at least make the attempt," said the prince. "And I want to try to deliver my brothers, who stand outside, turned to stone, and I would like to save you as well." "Well, if you insist upon it, we must see what we can do," replied the princess. "Now you must crawl under the bed here, and must listen carefully when I talk to the giant. But you must not

make a sound." The prince slipped under the bed, and no sooner was he there than the giant came home. "Hu, it smells like the flesh of a Christian here!" he cried. "Yes," said the princess, "a jackdaw flew by with a human bone, and let it fall down the chimney. I threw it out again at once, but the odor does not disappear so quickly." Then the giant said no more about it. Toward evening he went to bed, but after he had lain there a while, the princess, who sat looking out of the window, said: "There is something I would have asked you about long ago, if only I had dared." "And what may that be?" inquired the giant. "I would like to know where you keep your heart, since you do not have it about you?" said the princess. "O, that is something you need not ask about; at any rate, it lies under the threshold of the door," was the giant's reply. "Aha," thought the prince under the bed, "that is where we will find it!"

The next morning the giant got up very early, and went into the forest, and no sooner had he gone than the prince and the king's daughter set about looking for the heart under the threshold of the door. Yet no matter how much they dug and searched—they found nothing. "This time he has fooled us," said the princess. "We'll have to try again." And she picked the loveliest flowers she could find and strewed them over the threshold—which they had put to rights again—and when the time drew near for the giant's return, the king's son crept under the bed once more. When he was beneath it, the giant

came. "Hu hu, I smell human flesh!" he cried. "Yes," said the princess. "A jackdaw flew by with a human bone in her beak, and she let it fall down the chimney. I threw it out at once, but I suppose one can still smell it." Then the giant held his tongue, and said no more about it. After a time he asked who had strewn the flowers over the threshold. "O, I did that," said the princess. "What does it mean?" the giant then asked. "O, I am so fond of you that I had to do it, because I know that is where your heart lies." "Yes, of course," said the giant, "but it does not happen to lie there at all."

When he had gone to bed, the princess sat looking out of the window, and again asked the giant where he kept his heart, for she was so fond of him, said she, that she wanted to know above all things. "O, it is in the wardrobe there by the wall," said the giant. "Aha," thought the king's son under the bed, "that is where we will find it!"

The next morning the giant got up early, and went into the forest, and no sooner had he gone than the prince and the king's daughter set about looking for his heart in the wardrobe. Yet no matter how much they looked, they did not find it. "Well, well," said the princess, "we will have to try once more." Then she adorned the wardrobe with flowers and wreaths, and toward evening the king's youngest son again crawled under the bed. Then the giant came: "Hu hu, it smells of human flesh here!" he cried. "Yes," said the princess. "A jackdaw just this moment flew by with a human bone in her beak, and she let it

fall down the chimney. I threw it out again at once, but it may be that you can still smell it." When the giant heard this, he had nothing further to say about it. But not long afterward he noticed that the wardrobe was adorned with flowers and wreaths, and asked who had done it. "I," said the princess. "What do you mean by such tomfoolery?" asked the giant. "O, I am so fond of you that I had to do it, since I know that is where your heart lies," was the reply of the princess. "Are you really so stupid as to believe that?" cried the giant. "Yes, surely, I must believe it," said the princess, "when you tell me so." "How silly you are," said the giant, "you could never reach the place where I keep my heart." "But still I would like to know where it is," answered the princess. Then the giant could no longer resist, and at last had to tell her the truth. "Far, far away, in a lake there lies an island," said he, "and on the island stands a church, and in the church there is a well, and in the well floats a duck, and in the duck there is an egg, and in the egg—is my heart!"

The next morning, before dawn, the giant went to the forest again. "Well, now I must get under way," said the prince, "and it is a way I wish I could find." So he said farewell to the princess for the time being, and when he stepped out of the door, the wolf was standing there waiting for him. He told him what had happened at the giant's, and said that now he would go to the well in the church, if only he knew the way. The wolf told him to climb

on his back. He would manage to find the way, said he. And then they were off as though they had wings, over rock and wood, over hill and dale. After they had been underway for many, many days, they at last reached the lake. Then the king's son did not know how they were to get across. But the wolf told him not to worry, and swam across with the prince to the island. Then they came to the church. But the church-key hung high up in the tower, and at first the king's son did not at all know how they were to get it down. "You must call the raven," said the wolf, and that is what the king's son did. And the raven came at once, and flew right down with the key, and now the prince could enter the church. Then, when he came to the well, there was the duck, sure enough, swimming about as the giant had said. He stood by the well and called the duck, and at last he lured her near him, and seized her. But at the moment he grasped her and lifted her out of the water, she let the egg fall into the well, and now the prince again did not know how he was to get hold of it. "Well, you must call the salmon," said the wolf. That is what the king's son did, and the salmon came at once, and brought up the egg from the bottom of the well. Then the wolf told him to squeeze the egg a little. And when the prince squeezed, the giant cried out. "Squeeze it again!" said the wolf, and when the prince did so, the giant cried out far more dolefully, and fearfully and tearfully begged for his life. He would do all the king's son asked him to, said he, if only he would not

"THEY AT LAST REACHED THE LAKE."

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squeeze his heart in two." Tell him to give back their original form to your six brothers, whom he turned to stone, and to their brides, as well; and that then you will spare his life," said the wolf, and the prince did so. The troll at once agreed, and changed the six brothers into princes, and their brides into kings' daughters. "Now squash the egg!" cried the wolf. Then the prince squeezed the egg in two, and the giant burst into pieces.

When the king's youngest son had put an end to the giant in this way, he rode back on his wolf to the giant's home; and there stood his six brothers as much alive as ever they had been, together with their brides. Then the prince went into the hill to get his own bride, and they all rode home together. And great was the joy of the old king when his seven sons all returned, each with his bride. "But the bride of my youngest is the most beautiful, after all, and he shall sit with her at the head of the table!" said the king. And then they had a feast that lasted for weeks, and if they have not stopped, they are feasting to this very day.

NOTE

The fairy-tale, "The Giant Who Did Not Have His Heart About Him" (Asbjörnsen and Moe, N.F.E., p. 171, No. 36), is founded on the very ancient belief of the corporealization of the soul, and its existence without the body. It is a belief widely current among primitive peoples, and Koschei the Deathless of Russian fairy-tale resembles our giant, though in his case the egg which holds his soul is shattered on the ground, whereupon he dies at once.

XVII

THE THREE PRINCESSES IN WHITELAND

ONCE upon a time there was a fisherman, who lived near the king's castle, and caught fish for the king's table. One day when he had gone fishing, he could not catch a thing. Try as he might, no matter how he baited or flung, not the tiniest fish would bite; but when this had gone on for a while, a head rose from the water and said: "If you will give me the first new thing that has come into your house, you shall catch fish a-plenty!" Then the man agreed quickly, for he could think of no new thing that might have come into the house. So he caught fish all day long, and as many as he could wish for, as may well be imagined. But when he got home, he found that heaven had sent him a little son, the first new thing to come into the house since he had made his promise. And when he told his wife about it, she began to weep and wail, and pray to God because of the vow her husband had made. And the woman's grief was reported at the castle, and when it came to the king's ears, and he learned the reason, he promised to take the boy and see if he could not save him. And so the king took him and brought him up as though he were his own son, until he was grown. Then one day the boy asked whether he might not go out fishing with his father, he wanted to so very much, said he.

The king would not hear of it; but at last he was given permission, so he went to his father, and everything went well all day long, until they came home in the evening. Then the son found he had forgotten his handkerchief, and went down to the boat to get it. But no sooner was he in the boat than it moved off with a rush, and no matter how hard the youth worked against it with the oars, it was all in vain. The boat drove on and on, all night long, and at last he came to a white strand, far, far away. He stepped ashore, and after he had gone a while he met an old man with a great, white beard. "What is this country called?" asked the youth. "Whiteland," was the man's answer, and he asked the youth where he came from, and what he wanted, and the latter told him. "If you keep right on along the shore," said the man, "you will come to three princesses, buried in the earth so that only their heads show. Then the first will call you—and she is the oldest—and beg you very hard to come to her and help her; and the next will do the same; but you must go to neither of them; walk quickly past them, and act as though you neither saw nor heard them. But go up to the third, and do what she asks of you, for then you will make your fortune."

When the youth came to the first princess, she called out to him, and begged him most earnestly to come to her; but he went on as though he had not seen her. And he passed the next one in the same manner; but went over to the third. "If you will do what I tell you to, you shall have whichever one of

us you want," said she. Yes, he would do what she wanted. So she told him that three trolls had wished them into the earth where they were; but that formerly they had dwelt in the castle he saw on the edge of the forest.

"Now you must go to the castle, and let the trolls whip you one night through for each one of us," said she, "and if you can hold out, you will have delivered us." "Yes," said the youth, he could manage that. "When you go in," added the princess, "you will find two lions standing by the door; but if you pass directly between them, they will do you no harm. Go on into a dark little room and lie down, and then the troll will come and beat you; but after that you must take the bottle that hangs on the wall, and anoint yourself where he has beaten you, and you will be whole again. And take the sword that hangs beside the bottle, and kill the troll with it." He did as the princess had told him, passed between the lions as though he did not see them, and right into the little room, where he lay down. The first night a troll with three heads and three whips came, and beat the youth badly; but he held out, and when the troll had finished, he took the bottle and anointed himself, grasped the sword and killed the troll. When he came out in the morning the princesses were out of the ground up to their waists. The next night it was the same; but the troll who came this time had six heads and six whips, and beat him worse than the first one. But when he came out in the morning, the princesses were out of the ground

up to their ankles. The third night came a troll who had nine heads and nine whips, and he beat and whipped the youth so severely that at last he fainted. Then the troll took him and flung him against the wall, and as he did so the bottle fell down, and its whole contents poured over the youth, and he was at once sound and whole again. Then he did not delay, but grasped the sword, killed the troll, and when he came out in the morning, the princesses were entirely out of the ground. So he chose the youngest of them to be his queen, and lived long with her in peace and happiness.

But at last he was minded to travel home, and see how his parents fared. This did not suit his queen; but since he wanted to go so badly, and finally was on the point of departure, she said to him: "One thing you must promise me, that you will only do what your father tells you to do, but not what your mother tells you to do." And this he promised. Then she gave him a ring which had the power of granting two wishes to the one who wore it. So he wished himself home, and his parents could not get over their surprise at seeing how fine and handsome he had become.

When he had been home a few days, his mother wanted him to go up to the castle and show the king what a man he had grown to be. His father said: "No, he had better not do that, for we will have to do without him in the meantime." But there was no help for it, the mother begged and pleaded until he went. When he got there he was

more splendidly dressed and fitted out than the other king. This did not suit the latter, and he said: "You can see what my queen looks like, but I cannot see yours; and I do not believe yours is as beautiful as mine." "God grant she were standing here, then you would see soon enough!" said the young king, and there she stood that very minute. But she was very sad, and said to him: "Why did you not follow my advice and listen to your father? Now I must go straight home, and you have used up both of your wishes." With that she bound a ring with her name on it in his hair, and wished herself home.

Then the young king grew very sad, and went about day in, day out, with no other thought than getting back to his queen. "I must try and see whether I cannot find out where Whiteland is," thought he, and wandered forth into the wide world. After he had gone a while he came to a hill; and there he met one who was the lord of all the beasts of the forest—for they came when he blew his horn —and him the king asked where Whiteland was. "That I do not know," said he, "but I will ask my beasts." Then he called them up with his horn, and asked whether any of them knew where Whiteland might be; but none of them knew anything about it.

Then the man gave him a pair of snowshoes. "If you stand in them," said he, "you will come to my brother, who lives a hundred miles further on. He is the lord of the birds of the air. Ask him. When you have found him, turn the snowshoes around so

that they point this way, and they will come back home of their own accord." When the king got there, he turned the snowshoes around, as the lord of the beasts had told him, and they ran home again. He asked about Whiteland, and the man called up all the birds with his horn, and asked whether any of them knew where Whiteland might be. But none of them knew. Long after the rest an old eagle came along; and he had been out for some ten years, but did not know either.

"Well," said the man, "I will lend you a pair of snowshoes. When you stand in them you will come to my brother, who lives a hundred miles further on. He is the lord of all the fishes in the sea. Ask him. But do not forget to turn the snowshoes around again." The king thanked him, stepped into the snowshoes, and when he came to the one who was lord of all the fishes in the sea, he turned them around, and they ran back like the others. There he once more asked about Whiteland.

The man called up his fishes with his horn, but none of them knew anything about it. At last there came an old, old carp, whom he had called with his horn only at the cost of much trouble. When he asked him, he said: "Yes, I know it well, for I was cook there for fully ten years. To-morrow I have to go back again, because our queen, whose king has not come home again, is going to marry some one else." "If such be the case," said the man, "I'll give you a bit of advice. Out there by the wall three brothers have been standing for the last hun-

dred years, fighting with each other about a hat, a cloak and a pair of boots. Any one who has these three things can make himself invisible, and wish himself away as far as ever he will. You might say that you would test their possessions, and then decide their quarrel for them." Then the king thanked him, and did as he said. "Why do you stand there fighting till the end of time?" said he to the brothers. "Let me test your possessions if I am to decide your quarrel." That suited them; but when he had hat, cloak and boots, he told them: "I will give you my decision the next time we meet!" and with that he wished himself far away. While he was flying through the air he happened to meet the North Wind. "And where are you going?" asked the North Wind. "To Whiteland," said the king, and then he told him what had happened to him. "Well," said the North Wind, "you are traveling a little quicker than I am; for I must sweep and blow out every corner. But when you come to your journey's end, stand on the steps beside the door, and then I'll come roaring up as though I were going to tear down the whole castle. And when the prince who is to have the queen comes and looks out to see what it all means, I'll just take him along with me."

The king did as the North Wind told him. He stationed himself on the steps; and when the North Wind came roaring and rushing up, and laid hold of the castle walls till they fairly shook, the prince came out to see what it was all about. But that very moment the king seized him by the collar, and

threw him out, and the North Wind took him and carried him off. When he had borne him away, the king went into the castle. At first the queen did not recognize him, for he had grown thin and pale because he had wandered so long in his great distress; but when he showed her the ring, she grew glad at heart, and then they had a wedding which was such a wedding that the news of it spread far and wide.

NOTE

"The Three Princesses in Whiteland" (Asbjörnsen and Moe, N.F.E., p. 38, No. 9), tells a story rich in incident, of the youth who could not hold his tongue.

XVIII

TROUBLE AND CARE

FAR, far from here there once lived a king, who had three beautiful daughters. But he had no sons, and therefore he grew so fond of the three princesses that he granted their every wish. But in time the enemy invaded the country, and the king had to go to war. When he set out, the oldest princess begged him to buy her a ring that would prevent her dying as long as she wore it. The second princess asked him for a wreath that would make her happy whenever she looked at it, no matter how sad and troubled her heart might be. "Buy me trouble and care!" said the youngest. And the king promised everything.

When he had driven the enemy out of his own land, and out of the neighboring land as well, and was about to set out for home, he remembered what he had promised the three princesses. The ring and the wreath were easy enough to obtain; but trouble and care were to be had neither in one place nor in another, for all the people were so happy that the enemy had been driven out, that there was no sorrow nor care to be found in the entire kingdom. And since he could not buy it, it was not to be had at all, and he had to travel home without it, loathe as he was to do so.

When he was not far from the castle, his way took him through a thick forest. And there sat a squirrel in a tree by the road. "Buy me! buy me! My name is trouble and care!" it said. Thought the king to himself, It is better to have a squirrel than two empty hands, so he brought it along for his youngest daughter. And she was quite as well pleased with her present as her two sisters were with the ring and the wreath. The squirrel played about in her room, sometimes it balanced itself on the bed-posts, at others it would sit on the top of the wardrobe, and it always had a great deal to chatter about.

But as soon as it grew dark, it turned into a man. And he told her how an evil and malicious giantess dwelt in the golden forest, who had turned him into a squirrel because he would not marry her. During the night she had no power over him; but every morning at daybreak he had to slip back into his squirrel form.

And in the course of time the princess actually wanted to marry Trouble and Care; but when they were betrothed, he begged her earnestly, and as best he knew how, never to light a light at night, and try to look at him, "for then both of us would be unhappy," said he. No, said she, she would be quite sure not to do so.

And every evening, when the princess had lain down and blown out the light, she would hear a man go into Trouble and Care's room; but when morning dawned, the squirrel sat on her bed-post and greeted

her, and chattered and babbled about all sorts of things.

Once, when she thought Trouble and Care had gone to sleep, she could not help herself; but stood up quietly, lit a light and crept softly into his room and to his bed, and when the ray of light fell on him, she saw that he was far, far handsomer than the most handsome prince. He was so surpassingly handsome that she bent over him in order to see more clearly, and finally she could not help herself, but had to kiss him. And then, three drops of wax from the candle fell on his chest, and he awoke.

"But how could you have done this!" he cried, and was quite unhappy. "Had you only waited three days longer, I should have been free!" said he. "But now I must return to the evil giantess and marry her, and all is over between us." "Can I not follow you there?" asked the princess. "No, that is something you could not do in all your days, for if you rest or even so much as bend your knees to sit down, you will go back during the night as far as you came forward during the day," said he; leaped to the door, and disappeared.

Then the princess wept and wailed, and waited for him to return; but she heard and saw nothing more of him. After a few days she grew so restless and wretched that she could no longer remain at home, and implored her maid to go along with her to search for the golden forest. The girl finally allowed herself to be moved; but she would not agree to set out until she had gotten together a yard of

drilling, a yard of ticking, and a yard of fine linen; and she got them at once, as you may imagine, for there was no shortage of such things in the castle.

So they set out and wandered far, and ever farther, until their feet ached, and their spirits fell. Toward evening they came into the middle of a thick, dark forest; and climbed up into a high tree. The princess was so tired that the maid had to hold her in her arms while she slept a little. But during the night the ground about the tree grew alive with wolves, in the most sinister fashion, and they howled and cried, so that the princess did not venture to close her eyes another moment. But when daylight appeared in the skies, it seemed as though the wolves had suddenly all been blown away.

The following day they wandered far and ever farther, until their feet ached more, and their spirits sank lower. Toward evening they again came to the middle of a thick, dark forest. And they once more climbed into a high, high tree; but the princess was so tired that the maid had to hold her in her arms while she slept a little. When it grew darker, a most alarming number of bears flocked together under the tree, and began to dance and turn in a circle, with alarming speed, and all at once they tried to climb the tree. So the princess and her maid had to stand up in the tree-top the whole night through, and could not close an eye; but when day came, it seemed as though the bears sank into the earth in a single moment.

The third day they wandered far and ever farther, and then a bit more. Toward evening they again came to a thick, dark forest. There they again climbed into a high, high tree; but no sooner were they up in the tree than the ground beneath the tree and the whole forest were alive with lions, and they all roared and howled together in such a gruesome way that the echoes came back from rock and woodland. Suddenly they began to dance and whirl around in such a terrible fashion that the earth trembled, and in between they would clutch the tree again, and try to shake and loosen it, as though they would pull it out root and branch. The princess and her maid had to stand up in the very tree-top, and though they were so tired they could have fallen down from time to time, neither of them dared think of sleeping. But the moment day dawned, the lions all suddenly disappeared from the face of the earth, where they were, walking and standing.

Then they stumbled along, this way and that, the whole day long, until their feet ached harder than hard, and their spirits sank lower than low. They lost path and direction, and though they hunted north and south and east and west, they could not find the way out of the great, dark forest.

At last the princess grew tired and sad beyond all measure, and wanted to sit down every moment, in order to rest a little; but the maid held her and dragged her forward, and never let her bend her knees for a moment to sit down, because then they would have gone back just as far as they had come

that day; for you must know that the giantess in the golden forest had so arranged matters.

In the evening they came to an enormous, horrible rock. "I will knock here," said the maid, and tapped and knocked. "O no," said the princess, "please don't knock here, you can see how ugly everything is here!" "Who is knocking there at my door?" cried the giantess in the rock, in a loud, harsh manner, opened the door, and stuck her nose—it was all of a yard long—out through the crack.

"The youngest princess and her maid, they want to get to a prince in the golden forest, whose name is Trouble and Care," was the maid's reply.

"O, faugh!" cried the giantess, "that is so far to the north that one can neither sail nor row there. But what do you want of Trouble and Care? Is this, perhaps, the princess who wanted to marry him?" asked the giantess. Yes, this was the princess. "Well, she will never get him as long as she lives," said the giantess, "for now he must marry the great giantess in the golden forest. You might just as well go back home now as later," said she. No, they would not turn back for anything, and the maid asked whether it would not be possible for her to take them in for the darkest part of the night. "I can take you in easily enough," said the giantess, "but when my husband comes home he will tear off your heads, and eat you up!" But there was no help for it, they could not go on in the middle of the night. Then the maid pulled out the yard of ticking, and gave it to the giantess for linen. "It can't

be true! It can't be true!" cried she. "Here I have been married all of a hundred years, and have never yet had any ticking!" And she was so pleased that she invited the wanderers in, received them kindly, and took the best care of them. After a while, when they had strengthened themselves with food and drink, the giantess said to them: "Yes, he is a ferocious fellow, is my husband, and I will have to hide you in the anteroom. Perhaps he will not find you then." And she prepared a bed for them, as soft and comfortable as a bed can be; but they did not care to lie down in it, nor sit in it; no, they could not even close their eyes, for they had to watch to see that their knees did not bend. So they stood the whole night through, and took turns holding each other up, for by now the maid was so weary and wretched that she was ready to give in.

Toward midnight it began to thunder and rumble in a terrible manner. This was the troll coming home; and no sooner had he thrust his first head in at the door than he cried out loudly and harshly: "Faugh! faugh! I smell Christian bodies!" and he rushed about in so wild and furious a manner that the sparks flew. "Yes," said the giantess, "a bird flew past with a bone from a Christian, and he let it drop down the chimney. I threw it out again as quickly as I could, but perhaps one can smell it still," said the giantess, and soothed him again. And he was satisfied with her explanation. But the next morning the giantess told him that the youngest princess and her maid had come in search of a prince

named Trouble and Care, in the golden forest. "O faugh! that is so far to the north that one can neither sail nor row there!" the troll at once cried. "It is the princess who wanted to marry him, I know, but she will never get him as long as she lives, for he has to marry the great giantess in three days' time. But the maidens shall not get away from me! Where are they, where are they?" he cried, and sniffed and snuffed about in every corner. "O no, you must not touch them," said the giantess. "They have given me a yard of ticking, and here I have been married now for more than a hundred years, and have never owned any ticking. Therefore you must lend them your seven-mile waistcoat to the nearest neighbor," said the giantess, and pleaded for the girls. And the troll was willing when he heard how kind they had been to his wife.

When they had eaten and were ready to travel, he put his seven-mile waistcoat on them: "And now you must repeat: 'Forward over willow bush and pine-tree, over hill and dale, to the nearest neighbor,'" said he. "And when you get there you must say: 'You are to be hung up this evening where you were put on this morning!'" The maidens did as he said, and were carried for miles, over hill and dale. In the evening, at dusk, they again came to a great, ugly rock. There they pulled off the seven-mile waistcoat and said: "You are to be hung up this evening where you were put on this morning," and then the waistcoat ran home by itself.

"I will knock here," said the maid, and knocked

and thumped on the rock. "O no," said the princess, "please do not knock here. You can see how sinister everything is here!" "Who is thumping at my door?" cried the giantess inside the rock, more loudly and harshly than the first one, and she opened the door and thrust her nose, that was all of two yards long, right through the crack. "Here stand the youngest princess and her maid, and they are looking for a prince named Trouble and Care, who lives in the golden forest," answered the maid. And then this giantess also said it was so far north that one could neither sail nor row there, and wanted them to turn back by all means. "You might just as well turn back now as later," said she. But this the maidens did not want to do at all, and the maid asked whether she would not, perhaps, take them in for the night, and if it were only the darkest part of the night. "Yes, I can take you in easily enough," said the giantess, "but when my husband comes home to-night, he will tear off your heads and eat you up!" Then the maid pulled out a yard of drilling, and gave it to the giantess for linen. "It can't be true! It can't be true! here I have been married now for over two hundred years, and I have never yet had any drilling in the house," cried the giantess, and she was so pleased that she invited them in, and received them kindly, and saw that they wanted for nothing. After a while, when they had strengthened themselves with food and drink, the giantess said: "Yes, he is a ferocious fellow, is my husband, and he eats up every Christian who comes

here, root and branch. I'll have to put you in the anteroom, perhaps he will not find you there," and she prepared a bed for the maidens. But they did not dare either to lie down nor sit on it, not for a single moment, for they had to watch to see that they did not bend their knees. So they stood there the whole night through, and took turns holding each other up, while each snatched a little sleep.

Toward midnight it began to rumble and thunder in such a terrible manner that they could feel the earth tremble beneath them. Then the troll came rushing in. "Faugh! faugh! I smell Christian bodies!" he cried out loudly and harshly, and thrashed about in such a furious way that the sparks flew from him as from a fire. "Yes," said the giantess, "a bird flew by, and let a bone from a Christian fall through the chimney. I threw it out again as quickly as I could, but it may well be the case that the smell still lingers," said she, and quieted her husband. And he was satisfied with her explanation. But when he got up in the morning, she told him that the youngest princess and her maid had come in search of a prince named Trouble and Care, in the golden forest. When the troll heard that, he also said that it was so far north that one could neither sail nor row there. "That is the princess who wanted to marry him. Yes, I know; but she will never get him as long as she lives, for he must marry the great giantess herself in two days' time," said the troll. "And where are they, these maidens? They shall not escape from me with their

lives!" he shouted, and sniffed and snuffed about everywhere. "O no, you must not harm them!" said the giantess, and told him that they had given her a yard of drilling for linen. "Therefore you must lend them your seven-mile waistcoat to the nearest neighbor," said she. And he was willing at once, when he heard how kind they had been to his giantess. When they had eaten in the morning, he put his seven-mile waistcoat on them. "When you reach your goal, you need only say: 'Where you were put on this morning, there you are to hang again to-night!' and then the seven-mile waistcoat will travel home by itself," said the troll. Then they were carried for miles, over hill and dale, on and on. In the evening, at dusk, they again came to a great, ugly rock.

"I will knock here!" said the maid, and knocked and thumped on the rock. "O no," said the princess, "please do not knock here, you can see how sinister everything looks here!" "Who is thumping at my door?" the giantess cried inside the rock, in a ruder and harsher manner than the other two giantesses, and she opened the door just far enough so that she could thrust her nose, which was all of three yards long, through the crack. "Here stand the youngest princess and her maid, in search of a prince named Trouble and Care, who lives in the golden forest," was the maid's reply. "O faugh!" cried the giantess, "that is so far to the north that one can neither sail nor row there. But what do you want of Trouble and Care? Is this, perhaps,

the princess who wanted to marry him?" asked the giantess. Yes, this was the princess, was the maid's reply. Then this giantess said in turn: "He must marry the great giantess in the golden forest, so you might just as well turn back home now as later!" But this the maidens did not want to do at all, and the maid asked whether, perhaps, she would not take them in for the night, and if it were only for the very darkest part of the night.

"Yes, I can take you in easily enough," said the giantess, "but when my husband comes home to-night he will tear off your heads and eat you up!" But there was nothing else to do; they could not travel on through the wood and wilderness, in the very darkest part of the night. Then the maid pulled out the yard of linen and made the giantess a present of it. "It can't be true! It can't be true!" cried she. "Here I have been married now for more than three hundred years, and have never yet had a bit of linen!" And she was so pleased that she invited the maidens in, and received them kindly, and let them want for nothing. "He is a ferocious fellow, is my husband, and he does away with every Christian soul that strays here," she said, when her guests had eaten. "But I will hide you in the anteroom. Perhaps he will not find you there." Then she carefully made up a soft bed for them, as fine as the finest in the world. But now the princess was weary and wretched and sleepy beyond all measure. She could no longer stand up at all, and finally had to lie down and sleep a little,

and even though it were but a tiny little while. The maid was also so weary and wretched that she fell asleep standing, and fell over from time to time. Yet she still managed to keep her wits about her to the extent of seizing the princess, and holding her up, so that she did not bend her knees. Toward midnight it began to rumble and thunder so that the whole house shook, and it seemed as though the roof and walls would fall in. This was the great troll, who was coming home. When he thrust his first nose in at the door, he at once cried out in a manner so wild and harsh that the like had never been heard before: "Faugh! faugh! I smell Christian bodies!" and he fell into a white rage, so that sparks and flame flew from him. "Yes, a bird flew by, and let a bone from a Christian fall through the chimney. I threw it out as quickly as ever I could; but it may be that the smell still persists!" said the giantess, and tried to pacify her troll. And he was satisfied with her explanation. But when he awoke in the morning, she told him that the youngest princess and her maid had come in search of a prince named Trouble and Care, who lived in the golden forest. "O faugh! That is so far north that one can neither sail nor row there!" cried the great troll, just as the smaller trolls had. "But she will never get him as long as she lives, for to-morrow he must marry the great giantess. Where are they, these maidens? Hm, hm, hm, they will make tasty eating!" he cried, and danced around everywhere, and sniffed and snuffed with all his nine

noses at once. "O no, you must not harm them!" cried the giantess. "They have given me a yard of linen, and here I have been married for more than three hundred years, and have never had a bit of linen yet. Therefore you must lend them your seven-mile waistcoat to the nearest neighbor." And when the super-troll heard that the maidens had been so kind, he was agreeable.

When they had strengthened themselves in the morning, he put his seven-mile waistcoat on them. "And now you must repeat: 'On, on! Over willow brush and pine tree, over hill and dale, to the nearest neighbor.' And when you reach your goal, you need only say: 'You must hang again to-night on the nail from which you were taken down this morning!'" said the great troll. They did as he had told them, and were carried farther and farther along, over hills and deep valleys.

At dusk they came to a large, large forest, where all the trees were black as coal. If one only so much as touched them, they made one look like a chimney-sweep. And in the middle of the forest was a clearing, and there stood a wretched hut, ready to fall apart; it was only held together by two beams, and looked more forlorn than the most wretched herdsman's hut. And in front of the door lay a rubbish heap of old shoes, dirty rags and other ugly stuff. Here the maid took off the seven-mile waistcoat, and said: "You must hang again to-night from the nail from which you were taken down this morning!" and the waistcoat wandered home all by itself.

"I will knock here!" said the maid. "O no, O no," wailed the princess, "please do not knock here, you can see how ugly everything is!" "If you do not do as I do, then it will be the worse for both of us!" said the maid; trampled through the rubbish-pile and knocked. An old, old troll-woman with a nose all of three yards long, looked out through the crack in the door. "If you girls want to come in, then come in, and if you do not want to, you can stay out!" said she, and made as though to close the door in their faces. "Yes, indeed, we want to come in," replied the maid, and drew the princess in with her. "If you girls want to come through the door, then come through, but if you do not want to, you can stay out," the woman said once more. "Yes, thanks, we want to come in," said the maid, and tramped over the threshold through the dirt and rags. "Alas, alas!" wailed the princess, and tramped after her. All was black and ugly inside, and as grimy and dirty as a corn-loft. After a while the giantess went out, and fetched them some milk to drink. "If you girls want to drink, why, drink, and if you do not, why, do without!" said she, and was about to carry it out again. "Yes, thanks, we want to drink," said the maid, and drank. "Alas, alas!" wailed the princess, when it came her turn, for the milk was in a pig-trough, and dirt and clots of hair were swimming in it. Then the giantess gave them something to eat. "If you girls want to eat, why, eat, and if you do not, why, do without," said the giantess. "Yes, indeed, we will be glad to," said the

maid, before the ugly nosey could take the food away again. The bread was moldly, mice had been nibbling at the cheese, the meat was so old that one could smell it at a distance, and two dirty calves' tails were draped about the butter. "Alas, alas!" wailed the princess, and was ready to cry; but she had to do what her maid did, and taste the horrible dishes. Then they had to say they were much obliged. An old man, whom thus far they had not seen, lay on a bed covered with a few old odds and ends of fur and other rags. When they went up to him to thank him, he stood up, and when the princess gave him her hand he kissed it; and at that very moment he turned into a prince handsome beyond all measure, and the princess saw that he was Trouble and Care, for whom she had so greatly longed. "Now you have delivered me!" he said. "Woe to whoever has delivered you!" cried the giantess, and rushed out of the door; but on the door-step she stood like a stone, for the forest was no longer black, and all the trees looked as though they had been gilded from root to crest, and glittered and sparkled more brightly than the sun at noon-day. The wretched, dirty hut had changed into a royal castle, immensely large and handsome. One might have thought that the roof and walls were made of the purest gold and silver, and so they were. "Now you may bend your knee again," said the prince, "and if you have hitherto known nothing but sorrow and care, you shall henceforth know all the more happiness."

The old giantess had brewed and baked, and prepared the whole wedding dinner. And when the next day dawned, the prince and the princess, and all the people in the castle, and in the whole country over which he was king, celebrated the wedding. And it lasted for four times fourteen days, so that the news spread through seven kingdoms, and reached the bride's father and her two sisters. And they would have celebrated it with them, had they not been so far away. I was invited to the feast myself, and the bridegroom made me chief cook, and I had to speak the toast for the bride and groom. But on the last day of the feast, I had to draw mead from a large, large cask that lay at the farthest end of the cellar. Before I sent off the filled jug, I took a taste myself, and the mead was so strong that it suddenly went to my head, and I flew through the air like a bird, and there I was, floating between heaven and earth for full nine years, and then I fell down here in the village, in front of the house up there on the hill. And out came Bertha Friendly, with a letter for me from the prince, who had become king in the meantime, and the letter said that he and the young queen were doing well, and that they sent me their greetings, and that I was to greet you for them, and that you and your sisters were invited to the castle Sunday after Michaelmas, and then you should see a pair of dear little princes, the golden forest, and the old stone giantess, who stands before the door with her nose three yards long.

NOTE

The story of Cupid and Psyche is the most celebrated representative of the type of fairy-tale to which "Trouble and Care" belongs (Hallv. E. Bergh, *Nye Folkeeventyr og Sagn fra Valdres og Hallindal*, Coll. III, Christiania, 1882, No. 1). The northern peoples take special pleasure in tales of faithful women, who try to reach their vanished lovers by means of wearisome and difficult wanderings. Peculiar is the transformation of the lover into a squirrel, in this tale, and the condition that the poor princess must not bend her knees, that is, sit or crouch down, during her long journey. The end is a typical fairy-tale close, such as the narrator likes to add, without any inner relationship to the story itself.

XIX

KARI WOODENCOAT

ONCE upon a time there was a king whose wife had died, but he had a daughter who was so good and so beautiful that no one could have been kinder or lovelier than she. The king mourned a long time for the queen, because he had loved her greatly; but in the course of time he grew weary of his lonely life, and married again with the widow of another king, who also had a daughter; but one who was just as ugly and evil as the other was handsome and kind. The step-mother and daughter were jealous of the king's daughter, because she was so handsome; yet so long as the king was at home, they did not dare harm her, for he was very fond of her. But after a time, the king began to war against another king, and went out to battle. Then the queen thought she now could do as she wished, and she let the king's daughter starve, and beat and pushed her about everywhere. At last everything else was too good for her, and she had to herd the cows. So she went out with the cows, and pastured them in the forest or on the hill. Food she had little or none, and she grew pale and thin, and was sad most of the time, and wept. In the herd there was also a great blue bull, who always kept himself neat and clean, and often came to the

queen's daughter and let her scratch him. Once, as she sat there and cried and was sad, he came to her again, and asked why she was so unhappy. She did not answer him but kept on weeping. "Well, I know what your trouble is," said the bull, "even though you will not tell me. You are weeping because the queen is so unkind to you, and would gladly starve you to death. But you need not worry about food, for in my left ear is a cloth and, if you will take it out and spread it, you can have as much as you want to eat." She did so, took out the cloth, laid it on the grass, and it was at once covered with the finest dishes one might desire: bread and mead and honey-cake. Then she soon regained her strength, and grew so plump, and so rose and white complexioned that the queen and her daughter, who was as thin as a rail, turned green and yellow with envy. The queen could not understand how it was that her step-daughter came to look so well in spite of such poor fare. So she told a maid to follow her to the forest, and watch and see how it came about; for she thought some of the servants secretly gave her food. The maid followed her into the forest, and watched carefully, and saw how the step-daughter drew the cloth out of the blue bull's left ear, and spread it out, and how it covered itself with the finest dishes, and also how the king's daughter ate heartily. And the maid told the queen at home about it.

Now the king came home, and he had defeated the other king, against whom he had warred; and the

whole castle was overjoyed, and none was more joyful than the king's daughter. But the queen pretended to be ill, and gave the physician a great deal of money so that he should say that she could not recover unless she had some of the blue bull's flesh to eat. The king's daughter and others as well asked the physician whether nothing else would do, and pleaded for the bull; for all liked him, and said that there was not such another in the whole kingdom. But no, he must be slaughtered, and he should be slaughtered, and there was no help for it. When the king's daughter heard this, she felt sad, and went into the stable to the bull. He stood and hung his head, and looked so mournful that she could not keep from weeping. "Why do you weep?" asked the bull. Then she told him that the king had come home, and that the queen had pretended to be ill, and had forced the physician to say that she could not recover unless she had some of the blue bull's flesh to eat, and that now he was to be slaughtered. "Once she has done away with me, it will not be long before she does away with you," said the bull. "But if it suits you, we will run away from here to-night." The king's daughter did say that it would be bad enough to leave her father, but that at the same time it would be worse to remain under the same roof with the queen, and so she promised the bull to go with him.

In the evening, while the rest were asleep, the king's daughter crept down to the bull in the stable. He took her on his back, and ran off as quickly as

ever he could. And when the people rose the following morning, and wanted to slaughter the bull, he was gone; and when the king rose and asked for his daughter, she was gone as well. The king sent out messengers on all sides, and had the church-bells rung for her, but no one had seen anything of her.

In the meantime the bull trotted through many lands with the king's daughter, and they came to a great copper forest, whose trees, leaves and flowers were all of copper. But before they entered it, the bull said to the king's daughter: "Now when we get into the forest you must be very careful not to touch so much as a single leaf, or else it is all up with you and with me; for a troll with three heads lives here, and the forest belongs to him." Yes, indeed, she would be careful, and not touch anything. And she was very careful, and leaned to one side, and thrust aside the branches; but the forest was so thick that it was almost impossible to win through, and for all that she was so careful, she did tear off a leaf, and it remained in her hand.

"Alas, alas!" cried the bull. "What have you done! Now I must fight for my very life. But see that you keep the leaf carefully!" Straightway they reached the end of the forest, and at once a troll with three heads came rushing up. "Who has touched my forest?" cried he. "The forest is as much mine as yours!" was the bull's reply. "We'll see if it is!" shouted the troll. "That suits me!" cried the bull. Then they rushed at each other, and the bull gored and butted with might and main. But

the troll was just as strong, and it took all day before the bull gained the upper hand. And then he had so many wounds, and was so weak that he could scarcely walk. So they had to halt for a whole day; but the bull told the queen's daughter to take the horn of ointment that hung at the troll's girdle, and anoint him with the salve. Thereupon he grew strong and well again, and they went on the next day. Now they wandered for many, many days, and at last came to a silver forest, whose trees, branches, leaves, buds and all were of silver.

Before the bull entered the forest he said to the king's daughter: "Now when we get into this forest, in heaven's name be careful! You must touch nothing, and not even tear off so much as a single leaf, or else it is all up with you and me. A troll with six heads lives here, and the forest belongs to him, and I will hardly be able to hold my own against him!"

"Yes," said the king's daughter, "indeed I will be careful, and not touch the least thing, just as you have told me." But when they entered the forest, it was so thick that it was almost impossible to win through. She was as careful as she could be, and avoided the branches, and thrust them aside with her hands; but the branches struck her in the face each moment, and in spite of all her care a leaf did remain in her hand.

"Alas, alas!" cried the bull. "What have you done! Now I must fight for my very life, for the troll with six heads is twice as strong as the first

one; but see that you take care of the leaf and keep it carefully!"

At once the troll came rushing up. "Who has touched my forest?" cried he. "The forest is as much mine as yours!" cried the bull. "Oho, we'll see if it is!" cried the troll. "That suits me!" said the bull, and rushed on the troll, gored him, and thrust his horns right through him. But the troll was just as strong, and it took three whole days before the bull got the better of him. After that he was so weak and feeble that he could scarcely move, and so full of wounds that his blood ran in streams. Then he told the king's daughter to take the horn of ointment that hung at the troll's girdle, and anoint him with the salve. She did so, and he recovered again: yet they had to remain a time on the spot, until he was once more able to go on.

At last they set out again; but the bull was still weak, and at first they went slowly. The king's daughter wanted to spare him, and said she was young and quick on her feet, and could walk very well; but this he would not allow, and she had to sit on his back. Thus they wandered for a long time, and through many lands, and the king's daughter had no idea where they might be going; but at length they came to a golden forest. It was very beautiful, and the gold dripped down from it, for the trees, and branches and leaves and buds were all of purest gold. And here all went as it had in the copper and silver forests. The bull told the king's daughter that in no case was she to touch anything, since a

troll with nine heads lived here, to whom the forest belonged. And he was much larger and stronger than the two others together, and he did not believe he could hold his own against him. Yes, said she, she would be sure to pay attention and positively would not touch a thing. But when they entered the forest, it was even thicker than the silver forest, and the further they went the worse it became. The forest grew thicker and denser, and at last it seemed as though it would be impossible to push on at all. She was much afraid of tearing off anything, and wound and twisted and bent herself in every direction, in order to avoid the branches, and thrust them aside with her hands. But each moment they struck her in the face, so that she could not see where she was reaching, and before she had a chance to think, she held a golden apple in her hand. Then she was terribly frightened, and began to cry, and wanted to throw it away. But the bull told her to keep it, and hide it carefully, and consoled her as best he could. Yet he thought that the battle would be a hard one, and was in doubt as to whether it would end well.

But now the troll with the nine heads came rushing up, and he was so frightful that the king's daughter could scarcely bear to look at him. "Who has touched my forest?" he shouted. "The forest is as much mine as yours!" cried the bull. "We'll see if it is!" cried the troll. "That suits me!" said the bull, and with this they rushed on each other, so that it was a fearsome sight, and the king's daughter

nearly fainted. The bull gored the troll through and through with his horns; but the troll was as strong as he, and as soon as the bull killed one of his heads, the others breathed fresh life into it, and it took a full week before the bull got the better of him. But then he was so wretched and so weak that he could not move a bit. His whole body was covered with wounds; and he could not even tell the king's daughter to take the horn of ointment from the troll's girdle and anoint him with the salve. But she did so of her own accord, and then he recovered again. Yet they had to stay where they were for three whole weeks, until he was able to go on again.

At last they once more went slowly on their way; for the bull said they still had a little further to go, and they went over many great hills and through thick forests. After a time they came to a rock. "Do you see anything?" asked the bull. "No, I see only the sky and the rock," said the king's daughter. But when they went on up the hills were more level, so that they had a broader outlook. "Do you see something now?" asked the bull. "Yes, I see a small castle, far, far in the distance," said the princess. "And yet it is not so small," said the bull. At length they came to a great mountain with a steep, rocky face. "Do you see something now?" asked the bull. "Yes, now I see the castle close by, and it is much, much larger," said the king's daughter. "That is where you must go!" said the bull. "Just below the castle is a pig-sty, and if you go into it you will find a wooden coat. You must put

it on, and go with it into the castle, and say your name is Kari Woodencoat, and ask for a place. But now take your little knife and cut off my head; then draw off my skin, roll it up and lay it at the foot of the rock. But in it you must place the copper leaf, and the silver leaf, and the golden apple. Outside, against the hill, is a stick, and if you want anything of me, all you need do is to knock at the mountain-side." At first the princess could not at all make up her mind to do this; but when the bull told her that this was the only reward he wanted for all the good he had done her, she could not refuse. It made her heart ache, yet in spite of it, she took her knife and cut until she had cut off the head of the great beast, and had drawn off his skin, and then she laid the latter at the foot of the rock, and in it she placed the copper leaf, and the silver leaf, and the golden apple.

When she had done this she went to the pig-sty, but she wept a great deal and felt sad. Then she put on the wooden coat, and went to the king's castle in it. She asked for a place in the kitchen, and said her name was Kari Woodencoat. Yes, said the cook, she might have a place if she cared to wash up, for the girl who had formerly attended to it had run away. "And after you have been here a while, no doubt you will have enough of it, and run away from us, too," said he. No, indeed, she would not do so.

She was most industrious at her washing up. On Sunday they expected company at the king's castle;

and Kari asked permission to take up water to wash in to the prince. But the others laughed at her and cried; "What do you want to do there? Do you think the prince will have anything to do with you, homely as you are?" But she kept on asking, and at length received permission.

And then, as she ran up the stairs, her wooden coat clattered so loudly that the prince came out and asked: "And who are you?" "I came to bring you water to wash in," said Kari. "Do you think I want the water you are bringing me?" cried the prince, and poured the water out over her head. So she had to go off; but she asked permission to go to church. And she received permission, for the church was close by. But first she went to the rock and knocked at it with a stick, as the bull had told her. And a man came out at once and asked what she wanted. The king's daughter said that she had permission to go to church and hear the sermon, but that she had no dress to wear. Then the man gave her a dress that shone like the copper forest, and a horse and a saddle as well. When she came to church she looked so beautiful that all the people wondered who she might be, and none of them listended to the sermon, because they were all looking at her. She even pleased the prince so much that he could not keep from looking at her.

When she left the church, the prince came after her, and closed the church door behind her, and kept one of the gloves she wore in his hand. And then when she wanted to mount her horse, the prince came

again, and asked her where she came from. "From Washwaterland!" said Kari, and while the prince pulled out the glove and wanted to give it to her, she said:

"Be there light before me, and darkness behind,
That the place I ride to the prince may not find!"

The prince had never yet seen such a handsome glove, and he traveled far, looking for the native land of the noble lady who had abandoned her glove, but no one could tell him where it might be.

The following Sunday some one had to go up to the prince, and bring him a towel. "Cannot I go up?" begged Kari. "Is that all you want?" said the rest in the kitchen. "You saw yourself what happened to you the last time!" But Kari kept on asking, and finally she received permission, after all, and ran up the stairs so that her wooden coat fairly clattered. The prince at once thrust his head out of the door, and when he saw that it was Kari, he tore the towel out of her hand and flung it at her head. "Off with you, you horrid creature!" cried he. "Do you think I want a towel that you have touched with your dirty fingers?"

After that the prince went to church, and Kari also begged permission to go. The people asked her why she wanted to go to church, since she had nothing to wear but her ugly, black wooden coat. But Kari said the pastor preached so beautifully that she loved to listen to him, and finally they allowed

her to go. She went to the wall of rock and knocked, and the man came out and gave her a dress that was far handsomer than the first; it was embroidered all over with silver, and gleamed like the silver forest; and she also received a splendid horse, with housings embroidered with silver, and a silver bridle. When the king's daughter came to the church, the people were still standing before the church door. In their astonishment they all asked each other who she might be, and the prince came running up at once, and wanted to hold her horse while she dismounted. But she jumped right down, and said it would not be necessary, since the horse was so tame that it would stand still when she commanded, and come to her if she wished. Then every one went into the church. But hardly any one paid any attention to the sermon; for they were all looking at Kari, and the prince fell deeper in love with her than he had the first time. When the sermon was over, and she left the church and was about to mount her horse, the prince again came, and asked where she came from. "From Towelland!" said she, and let fall her riding-whip. And when the prince stooped to pick it up, she said:

"Be there light before me, and darkness behind,
That the place I ride to the prince may not find!"

Off she was, and the prince did not know what had become of her. He wandered about in the world, far and wide, looking for her native land. But no

one could tell him where it might be, and with that the prince finally had to content himself.

The following Sunday some one was to go up to the prince, and bring him a comb. Kari begged that they would let her go, but the others reminded her of what had happened the last time, and scolded her for showing herself to the prince, ugly and black as she was, and in her wooden coat. But she kept on asking, and finally they let her go with the comb. When she once more came clattering up the stairs, the prince thrust his head out of the door, tore the comb from her hand, and shouted at her to be off. Then the prince went to church, and Kari wanted to go as well. The rest again asked her why she wanted to go to church, black and ugly as she was, since she did not even have clothes fit to appear in before other people. The prince, or some one else might happen to see her, and that would mean unhappiness for herself and others. But Kari said that the people would have other things to look at besides herself, and finally they let her go.

Then everything happened exactly as on the other two occasions. She went to the wall of rock, and knocked with the stick, and then the man came out, and gave her a dress that was far more beautiful than both of the others. It was all pure gold and diamonds, and she also received a beautiful horse, with housings embroidered with gold, and a golden bridle.

When the king's daughter came to the church, the pastor and all the congregation were still standing before the church door, waiting for her. The prince

came running up at once, and wanted to hold her horse, but she jumped down and said: "No, thanks, it is not necessary, for my horse is so tame that he will remain standing when I tell him to do so." So they all went into the church, and the pastor mounted the pulpit. But not a soul listened to the sermon, because all the people were looking at the princess, and wondering where she came from, and the prince fell still more deeply in love than he had on the two other occasions. He paid no attention to anything, and looked only at her.

When the sermon was over, and the king's daughter left the church, the prince had poured tar on the floor of the vestibule, so that he might have a chance to help the king's daughter across. But she paid no attention to it, stepped right into the middle of the tar, and leaped over. But one of her golden shoes stuck fast, and when she had mounted her horse, the prince came running out of the church and asked her whence she came. "From Combland!" she answered. But when the prince wanted to hand her the golden shoe, she said:

"Be there light before me, and darkness behind,
That the place I ride to the prince may not find!"

And again the prince did not know where she had gone, and he wandered about the world a long time, looking for Combland; but since no one could tell him where it might be, he let it be known that he would marry the girl whose foot the golden shoe

fitted. Then the handsome and the homely came scurrying up from the ends of the earth; but none of them had a foot so small that they could put on the golden shoe. At last Kari's evil stepmother and her daughter also came, and the shoe fitted the latter. But she was very homely, and looked so unsatisfactory that the prince kept his promise most unwillingly. Notwithstanding, preparations were made for the wedding, and she was adorned with her bridal finery, but when they rode to church, a little bird sat in a tree and sang:

"A bit of the heel,
And a bit of the toe,
Kari Woodencoat's shoe
Is filled with blood, I know!"

And when they looked, the bird had told the truth, for blood was dripping from the shoe. Then all the maids and all the women who were at the castle had to try on the shoe, but it would fit none of them. "But where is Kari Woodencoat?" asked the prince, for he had understood the song of the bird, and remembered it well. "O she!" said the others. "It is not worth while having her come, for she has feet like a horse." "Be that as it may," said the prince. "But all the rest have tried it on, so she shall try it on as well. Kari!" he called out through the door, and Kari came clattering up the stairs so that everything shook, just as though a whole regiment of dragoons had arrived. "Now you shall try on

the golden shoe, and be a princess!" said the others, and made fun of her. But Kari took the shoe, put her foot into it without a bit of trouble, cast off her wooden coat, and stood there in her golden dress, so that she was all a-sparkle, and on her other foot she had the golden shoe's mate. The prince recognized her at once, put his arm around her, and kissed her. And she told him that she was a king's daughter, which made him still more happy, and then they celebrated their wedding.

"Spin, span, spun,
Now our tale is done!"

NOTE

"Kari Woodencoat" (Asbjörnsen and Moe, N.F.E., p. 79, No. 19) proves how arbitrarily the motives of a fairy-tale are sometimes handled. The blue bull helps the maiden out of her difficulties, and we expect that he will turn out to be a handsome prince, or a guardian spirit sent by the deceased mother. Instead of which he disappears from the story with hardly a trace, and Kari marries a foreign prince. The last part of the tale has an independent existence in a Russian fairy-story, "The Czar's Daughter in the Underground Kingdom."

XX

OLA STORBAEKKJEN

ONCE upon a time there lived a man in the forest of Dovre whose name was Ola Storbaekkjen. He was of giant build, powerful and fearless. During the winter he did not work, but traveled from one fair to another, hunting up quarrels and brawls. From Christiansmarkt he went to Branaes and Konigsberg, and thence to Grundsaet, and wherever he came squabbles and brawls broke out, and in every brawl he was the victor. In the summer he dealt in cattle at Valders and the fjords, and fought with the fjord-folk and the hill people of Halling and Valders, and always had the best of it. But sometimes they scratched him a bit with the knife, did those folk.

Now once, at the time of the hay harvest, he was home at Baekkjen, and had lain down to take a little after-dinner nap under the penthouse. And he was taken into the hill, which happened in the following way: A man with a pair of gilded goat's horns came along and butted Ola, but Ola fell upon him so that the man had to duck back, again and again. But the stranger stood up once more, and began to butt again, and finally he took Ola under his arm like a glove, and then both of them flew straight off into the hill.

In the place to which they came all was adorned with silver plates and dishes, and with ornaments of silver, and Ola thought that the king himself had nothing finer. They offered him mead, which he drank; but eat he would not, for the food did not seem to him to be appetizing. Suddenly the man with the gilded goat's horns came in, and gave Ola a shove before he knew it; but Ola came back at him as before, and so they beat and pulled each other through all the rooms, and along all the walls. Ola was of the opinion that they had been at it all night long; but by that time the scuffle had lasted over fourteen days, and they had already tolled the church bells for him on three successive Thursday evenings. On the third Thursday evening he was in ill case, for the people in the hill had in mind to thrust him forth. When the bells stopped ringing, he sat at a crack in the hill, with his head looking out. Had not a man come by and happened to spy him, and told the people to keep on ringing the church-bells, the hill would have closed over him again, and he would probably still be inside. But when he came out he had been so badly beaten, and was so miserable, that it passed all measure. The lumps on his head were each bigger than the other, his whole body was black and blue, and he was quite out of his mind. And from time to time he would leap up, run off and try to get back into the hill to take up his quarrel again, and fight for the gilded goat's horns. For those he wanted to break from the giant's forehead.

NOTE

A primitive enjoyment of brawling and pummeling is betrayed in the story of "Ola Storbaekkjen" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr*, II, p. 73. From the vicinity of Osterdalen, told by a reindeer-hunter).

XXI

THE CAT WHO COULD EAT SO MUCH

ONCE upon a time there was a man who had a cat, and she ate so very much that he did not want to keep her any longer. So he decided to tie a stone around her neck, and throw her into the river; but before he did so she was to have something to eat just once more. The woman offered her a dish of mush and a little potful of fat. These she swallowed, and then jumped out of the window. There stood the man on the threshing-floor.

"Good-day, man in the house," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat," said the man. "Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?"

"O, only a little, but my fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat, and I am thinking over whether I ought not to eat you as well," said she, and she seized the man and ate him up. Then she went into the stable. There sat the woman, milking.

"Good-day, woman in the stable," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat, is that you?" said the woman. "Have you eaten your food?" she asked.

"O, only a little to-day. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man

in the house, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you as well," said she, and she seized the woman and ate her up.

"Good-day, cow at the manger," said the cat to the bell-cow.

"Good-day, cat," said the bell-cow. "Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" "O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you as well," said the cat, and seized the bell-cow and ate her up. Then she went up to the orchard, and there stood a man who was sweeping up leaves.

"Good-day, leaf-sweeper in the orchard," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat," said the man. "Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?"

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she, and seized the leaf-sweeper and ate him up.

Then she came to a stone-pile. There stood the weasel, looking about him.

"Good-day, weasel on the stone-pile," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat," said the weasel. "Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?"

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you as well," said the cat, and seized the weasel and ate him up.

After she had gone a while, she came to a hazel-bush. There sat the squirrel, gathering nuts.

"Good-day, squirrel in the bush," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat! Have you already had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the squirrel.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she, and seized the squirrel and ate him up.

After she had gone a little while longer, she met Reynard the fox, who was peeping out of the edge of the forest.

"Good-day, fox, you sly-boots," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the fox.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the

house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you as well," said she, and seized the fox and ate him up too.

When she had gone a little further, she met a hare.

"Good-day, you hopping hare," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the hare.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she, and seized the hare and ate him up.

When she had gone a little further, she met a wolf.

"Good-day, you wild wolf," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the wolf.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the

squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the hopping hare, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she, and seized the wolf and ate him up, too.

Then she went into the wood, and when she had gone far and farther than far, over hill and dale, she met a young bear.

"Good-day, little bear brown-coat," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the bear.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little pot of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the hopping hare and the wild wolf, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she, and seized the little bear and ate him up.

When the cat had gone a bit further, she met the mother bear, who was clawing at the tree-stems so that the bark flew, so angry was she to have lost her little one.

"Good-day, you biting mother bear," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the mother bear.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-

cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the hopping hare and the wild wolf and the little bear brown-coat, and I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you as well," said she, and seized the mother bear and ate her, too.

When the cat had gone on a little further, she met the bear himself.

"Good-day, Bruin Good-fellow," said she.

"Good-day, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" asked the bear.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel in the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the hopping hare and the wild wolf and the little bear brown-coat and the biting mother bear, and now I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you as well," said she, and she seized the bear and ate him up, too.

Then the cat went far and farther than far, until she came into the parish. And there she met a bridal party on the road.

"Good-day, bridal party on the road," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?"

"O, only a little. My fast is hardly broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the hopping hare and the wild wolf and the little bear brown-coat and the biting mother bear and bruin good-fellow and now I'm thinking whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she, and she pounced on the whole bridal party, and ate it up, with the cook, the musicians, the horses and all.

When she had gone a bit farther, she came to the church. And there she met a funeral procession.

"Good-day, funeral procession at the church," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the funeral procession.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the hopping hare and the wild wolf and little bear brown-coat and the biting mother bear and bruin good-fellow and the bridal party on the road, and now I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she, and pounced on the

funeral procession, and ate up corpse and procession.

When the cat had swallowed it all, she went straight on up to the sky, and when she had gone far and farther than far, she met the moon in a cloud.

"Good-day, moon in a cloud," said the cat.

"Good-day, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the moon.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the wild wolf and little bear brown-coat and the biting mother bear and bruin good-fellow and the bridal party on the road and the funeral procession at the church, and now I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she, and pounced on the moon and ate him up, half and full.

Then the cat went far and farther than far, and met the sun.

"Good morning, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the sun.

"O, only a little," said the cat. "I have had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-

pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the hopping hare and the wild wolf and little bear brown-coat and the biting mother bear and bruin good-fellow and the bridal party on the road and the funeral procession at the church and the moon in a cloud, and now I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she, and pounced on the sun in the sky and ate him up.

Then the cat went far and farther than far, until she came to a bridge, and there she met a large billy-goat.

"Good morning, billy-goat on the broad bridge," said the cat.

"Good morning, cat! Have you had anything to eat yet to-day?" said the goat.

"O, only a little. My fast has hardly been broken," said the cat. "I had no more than a dish of mush and a little potful of fat and the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the hopping hare and the wild wolf and little bear brown-coat and the biting mother bear and bruin good-fellow and the bridal party on the road and the funeral procession at the church and the moon in a cloud and the sun in the sky, and now I'm thinking over whether I ought not to eat you up as well," said she.

"We'll fight about that first of all," said the goat, and butted the cat with his horns so that she rolled

off the bridge, and fell into the water, and there she burst.

Then they all crawled out, and each went to his own place, all whom the cat had eaten up, and were every one of them as lively as before, the man in the house and the woman in the stable and the bell-cow at the manger and the leaf-sweeper in the orchard and the weasel on the stone-pile and the squirrel in the hazel-bush and the fox, the sly-boots, and the hopping hare and the wild wolf and little bear brown-coat and the biting mother bear and bruin good-fellow and the bridal party on the road and the funeral procession at the church and the moon in a cloud and the sun in the sky.

NOTE

A real nursery fairy-tale is that of "The Cat Who Could Eat So Much" (Asbjörnsen, N.F.E., No. 102, p. 222. From Gudbrandsdal). It may be a survival from the time when it was believed that the sun and moon in the sky were devoured by a monster when they were obscured by a passing cloud.

XXII

EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON

ONCE upon a time there was a poor tenant farmer who had a number of children whom he could feed but poorly, and had to clothe in the scantiest way. They were all handsome; but the most beautiful, after all, was the youngest daughter, for she was beautiful beyond all telling.

Now it happened that one Thursday evening late in the fall there was a terrible storm raging outside. It was pitch dark, and it rained and stormed so that the house shook in every joint. The whole family sat around the hearth, and each was busy with some work or other. Suddenly there were three loud knocks on the window-pane. The man went out to see who was there, and when he stepped outside, there stood a great white bear.

"Good evening," said the white bear.

"Good evening," returned the man.

"If you'll give me your youngest daughter, I will make you just as rich as now you are poor," said the bear.

The man was not ill-pleased that he was to become so rich; yet he did think that first he ought to speak to his daughter about it. So he went in again, and said that there was a white bear outside, who had promised to make him just as rich as he was poor

now, if he could only have the youngest daughter for his bride. But the girl said no, and would not hear of it. Then the man went back to the bear again, and they both agreed that the white bear should return again the following Thursday and get his answer. In the meantime, however, the parents worked upon their daughter, and talked at length about all the riches they would gain, and how well she herself would fare. So at last she agreed, washed and mended the few poor clothes she had, adorned herself as well as she could, and made ready to travel. And what she was given to take along with her is not worth mentioning, either.

The following Thursday the white bear came to fetch his bride. The girl seated herself on his back with her bundle, and then he trotted off. After they had gone a good way, the white bear asked: "Are you afraid?"

"No, not at all," she answered.

"Just keep a tight hold on my fur, and then you will be in no danger," said the bear. So she rode on the bear's back, far, far away, until at last they came to a great rock. There the bear knocked, and at once a door opened through which they entered a great castle, with many brilliantly lighted rooms, where everything gleamed with gold and silver. Then they came into a great hall, and there stood a table completely covered with the most splendid dishes. Here the white bear gave the maiden a silver bell, and said that if there were anything she wanted, she need only ring the bell, and she should

have it at once. And after the maiden had eaten, and evening came on, she felt like lying down and going to sleep. So she rang her bell; and at its very first peal she found herself transported to a room in which stood the most beautiful bed one might wish to have, with silken cushions and curtains with golden tassels; and all that was in the room was of gold and silver. Yet when she had lain down and put out the light, she saw a man come in and cast himself down in a corner. It was the white bear, who was allowed to throw off his fur at night; yet the maiden never actually saw him, for he never came until she had put out the light, and before dawn brightened he had disappeared again.

For a time all went well; but gradually the maiden grew sad and silent; for she had not a soul to keep her company the live-long day, and she felt very homesick for her parents and sisters. When the white bear asked her what troubled her, she told him she was always alone, and that she wanted so very much to see her parents and sisters again, and felt very sad because she could not do so. "O that can be managed," said the white bear. "But first you must promise me that you will never speak to your mother alone; but only when others are present. Very likely she will take you by the hand, and want to lead you into her room, so that she can speak to you alone. But this you must not allow, otherwise you will make us both unhappy."

And then, one Sunday, the white bear actually came and told her that now she might make the trip

to her parents. So she seated herself on the bear's back, and the bear set out. After they had gone a very long distance, they at length came to a fine, large, white house, before which her brothers and sisters were running about and playing, and all was so rich and splendid that it was a real pleasure merely to look at it.

"This is where your parents live," said the white bear. "Only do not forget what I told you, or you will make us both unhappy." Heaven forbid that she should forget it, said the maiden; and when she had come to the house, she got down, and the bear turned back.

When the daughter entered her parents' home, they were more than happy; they told her that they could not thank her enough for what she had done, and that now all of them were doing splendidly. Then they asked her how she herself fared. The maiden answered that all was well with her, also, and that she had all that heart could desire. I do not know exactly all the other things she told them; but I do not believe she told them every last thing there was to tell. So in the afternoon, when the family had eaten dinner, it happened as the white bear had foretold; the mother wanted to talk to her daughter alone, in her room; but she thought of what the white bear had told her, and did not want to go with her mother, but said:

"All we have to say to each other can just as well be said here." Yet—she herself did not know exactly how it happened—her mother finally did per-

suade her, and then she had to tell just how things were. So she informed her that as soon as she put out the light at night, a man came and cast himself down in the corner of the room. She had never yet seen him, for he always went away before the dawn brightened. And this grieved her, for she did want to see him so very much, and she was alone through the day, and it was very dreary and lonely.

"Alas, perhaps he is a troll, after all," said the mother. "But I can give you some good advice as to how you can see him. Here is a candle-end, which you must hide under your wimple. When the troll is sleeping, light the light and look at him. But be careful not to let a drop of tallow fall on him."

The daughter took the candle-end and hid it in her wimple, and in the evening the white bear came to fetch her.

After they had gone a way the white bear asked whether everything had not happened just as he had said. Yes, such had been the case, and the maiden could not deny it.

"If you have listened to your mother's advice, then you will make us both unhappy, and all will be over between us," said the bear. "O, no, she had not done so," replied the maiden, indeed she had not.

When they reached home, and the maiden had gone to bed, all went as usual: a man came in and cast himself down in a corner of the room. But in the night, when she heard him sleeping soundly, she stood up and lighted the candle. She threw the light on him, and saw the handsomest prince one might

wish to see. And she liked him so exceedingly well that she thought she would be unable to keep on living if she could not kiss him that very minute. She did so, but by mistake she let three hot drops of tallow fall on him, and he awoke.

"Alas, what have you done!" cried he. "Now you have made both of us unhappy. If you had only held out until the end of the year, I would have been delivered. I have a step-mother who has cast a spell on me, so that by day I am a bear, and at night a human being. But now all is over between us, and I must return to my step-mother. She lives in a castle that is east of the sun and west of the moon, where there is a princess with a nose three yards long, whom I must now marry.

The maiden wept and wailed; but to no avail, for the prince said he must journey away. Then she asked him whether she might not go with him. No, said he, that could not be.

"But can you not at least tell me the road, so that I can search for you. For surely that will be permitted me?"

"Yes, that you may do," said he. "But there is no road that leads there. The castle lies east of the sun and west of the moon, and neither now nor at any other time will you find the road to it!"

When the maiden awoke the next morning, the prince as well as the castle had disappeared. She lay in a green opening in the midst of a thick, dark wood, and beside her lay the bundle of poor belongings she had brought from home. And when she

had rubbed the sleep out of her eyes, and had cried her fill, she set out and wandered many, many days, until at last she came to a great hill. And before the hill sat an old woman who was playing with a golden apple. The maiden asked the woman whether she did not know which road led to the prince who lived in the castle that was east of the sun and west of the moon, and who was to marry a princess with a nose three yards long.

"How do you come to know him?" asked the woman. "Are you, perhaps, the maiden he wanted to marry?"

"Yes, I am that maiden," she replied.

"So you are that girl," said the woman. "Well, my child, I am sorry to say that all I know of him is that he lives in the castle that is east of the sun and west of the moon, and that you will probably never get there. But I will loan you my horse, on which you may ride to my neighbor, and perhaps she can tell you. And when you get there just give the horse a blow back of his left ear, and order him to go home. And here, take this golden apple along!"

The maiden mounted the horse, and rode a long, long time. At length she again came to a hill, before which sat an old woman with a golden reel. The maiden asked whether she could not tell her the road which led to the castle that lay east of the sun and west of the moon. This woman said just what the other had, no, she knew no more of the castle than that it lay east of the sun and west of the moon. "And," said she, "you will probably

never get there. But I will loan you my horse to ride to the nearest neighbor; perhaps she can tell you. And when you have reached her just give the horse a blow back of his left ear, and order him to go home again." And finally she gave the maiden the golden reel, for, said the old woman, it might be useful to her.

The maiden then mounted the horse, and again rode a long, long time. At length she once more came to a great hill, before which sat an old woman spinning at a golden spindle. Then the maiden once more asked after the prince, and the castle that lay east of the sun and west of the moon. And everything happened exactly as on the two previous occasions.

"Do you happen to be the maiden the prince wanted to marry?" asked the old woman.

"Yes, I am that maiden," answered the maiden.

But this old woman knew no more about the road than the two others. "Yes, the castle lies east of the sun and west of the moon, that I know," said she. "And you will probably never get there. But I will loan you my horse, and you may ride on it to the East Wind and ask him. Perhaps he is acquainted there, and can blow you thither. And when you reach him, just give my horse a blow back of the left ear, and then he will return here of his own accord." Finally the old woman gave her her golden spindle. "Perhaps it may be useful to you," said she.

The maiden now rode for many days and weeks,

and it took a long, long time before she came to the East Wind. But at last she did find him, and then she asked the East Wind whether he could show her the road that led to the prince who lived in the castle that was east of the sun and west of the moon.

O, yes, he had heard tell of the prince, and of the castle as well, said the East Wind, but he did not know the road that led to it, for he had never blown so far. "But if you wish, I will take you to my brother, the West Wind, and perhaps he can tell you, for he is much stronger than I am. Just sit down on my back, and I will carry you to him."

The maiden did as he told her, and then they moved swiftly away. When they came to the West Wind, the East Wind said that here he was bringing the maiden whom the prince who lived in the castle that lay east of the sun and west of the moon had wanted to marry, that she was journeying on her way to him, and looking for him everywhere, and that he had accompanied her in order to find out whether the West Wind knew where this castle might be.

"No," said the West Wind to the maiden, "I have never blown so far, but if you wish I will take you to the South Wind, who is much stronger than both of us, and has traveled far and wide, and perhaps he can tell you. Seat yourself on my back, and I will carry you to him."

The maiden did so, and then they flew quickly off to the South Wind. When they found him, the West Wind asked whether the South Wind could show

them the road that led to the castle that lay east of the sun and west of the moon; and that this was the maiden who was to have the prince.

"Well, well, so this is the girl?" cried the South Wind. "Yes, it is true that I have gone about a good deal during my life," said he, "yet I have never blown so far. But if you wish, I will take you to my brother, the North Wind. He is the oldest and strongest of us all. If he does not know where the castle lies, then no one in the whole world can tell you. Seat yourself on my back, and I will carry you to him."

The maiden seated herself on the back of the South Wind, and he flew away with a roar and a rush. The journey did not take long.

When they had reached the dwelling of the North Wind, the latter was so wild and unmannerly that he blew a cold blast at them while they were still a good way off. "What do you want?" cried he, as soon as he caught sight of them, so that a cold shiver ran down their backs.

"You should not greet us so rudely," said the South Wind. "It is I, the South Wind. And this is the maiden who wanted to marry the prince who lives in the castle that lies east of the sun and west of the moon. She wishes to ask you whether you have ever been there, and if you can show her the road that leads to it; for she would like to find the prince again."

"O, yes, I know very well where the castle lies," said the North Wind. "I blew an aspen leaf there

just once, and then I was so weary that I could not blow at all for many a long day. But if you want to get there above all things, and are not afraid of me, I will take you on my back, and see whether I can blow you there."

The maiden said that she must and would get to the castle, if it were by any means possible, and that she was not afraid, no matter how hard the journey might be. "Very well, then you must stay here over night," said the North Wind. "For if we are to get there to-morrow, we must have the whole day before us."

Early the next morning the North Wind awakened the maiden. Then he blew himself up, and made himself so large and thick that he was quite horrible to look at, and thereupon they rushed along through the air as though they meant to reach the end of the world at once. And everywhere beneath them raged such a storm that forests were pulled out by the roots, and houses torn down, and as they rushed across the sea, ships foundered by the hundreds. Further and further they went, so far that no one could even imagine it, and still they were flying across the sea; but gradually the North Wind grew weary, and became weaker and weaker. Finally he could hardly keep going, and sank lower and lower, and at last he flew so low that the waves washed his ankles.

"Are you afraid?" asked the North Wind.

"No, not at all," answered the maiden. By now they were not far distant from the land, and the

North Wind had just enough strength left to be able to set down the maiden on the strand, beneath the windows of the castle that lay east of the sun and west of the moon. And then he was so wearied and wretched that he had to rest many a long day before he could set out for home again.

The next morning the maiden seated herself beneath the windows of the castle and played with the golden apple, and the first person who showed herself was the monster with the nose, whom the prince was to marry.

"What do you want for your golden apple?" asked the princess with the nose, as she opened the window.

"I will not sell it at all, either for gold or for money," answered the maiden.

"Well, what do you want for it, if you will not sell it either for gold or for money?" asked the princess. "Ask what you will!"

"I only want to speak to-night to the prince who lives here, then I will give you the apple," said the maiden who had come with the North Wind.

The princess replied that this could be arranged, and then she received the golden apple. But when the maiden came into the prince's room in the evening, he was sleeping soundly. She called and shook him, wept and wailed; but she could not wake him, and in the morning, as soon as it dawned, the princess with the long nose came and drove her out.

That day the maiden again sat beneath the windows of the castle, and wound her golden reel. And all went as on the preceding day. The princess asked

what she wanted for the reel, and the maiden answered that she would sell it neither for gold nor for money; but if she might speak that night to the prince, then she would give the reel to the princess. Yet when the maiden came to the prince, he was again fast asleep, and no matter how much she wept and wailed, and cried and shook, she could not wake him. But as soon as day dawned, and it grew bright, the princess with the long nose came and drove her out. And that day the maiden again seated herself beneath the windows of the castle, and spun with her golden spindle; and, of course, the princess with the long nose wanted to have that, too. She opened the window, and asked what she wanted for the golden spindle. The maiden replied, as she had twice before, that she would sell the spindle neither for gold nor money; but that the princess could have it if she might speak to the prince again that night. Yes, that she was welcome to do, said the princess, and took the golden spindle. Now it happened that some Christians, who were captives in the castle, and quartered in a room beside that of the prince, had heard a woman weeping and wailing pitifully in the prince's room for the past two nights. So they told the prince. And that evening when the princess came to him with his night-cap, the prince pretended to drink it; but instead poured it out behind his back, for he could well imagine that she had put a sleeping-powder into the cup. Then, when the maiden came in, the prince was awake, and she had to tell him just how she had found the castle.

"You have come just in the nick of time," said he, "for to-morrow I am to marry the princess; but I do not want the monster with the nose at all, and you are the only person who can save me. I will say that first I wish to see whether my bride is a capable housewife, and demand that she wash the three drops of tallow from my shirt. She will naturally agree to this, for she does not know that you made the spots, for only Christian hands can wash them out again, but not the hands of this pack of trolls. Then I will say I will marry none other than the maiden who can wash out the spots, and ask you to do so," said the prince. And then both rejoiced and were happy beyond measure.

But on the following day, when the wedding was to take place, the prince said: "First I would like to see what my bride can do!" Yes, that was no more than right, said his mother-in-law. "I have a very handsome shirt," continued the prince, "which I would like to wear at the wedding. But there are three tallow-spots on it, and they must first be washed out. And I have made a vow to marry none other than the woman who can do this. So if my bride cannot manage to do it, then she is worthless."

Well, that would not be much of a task, said the women, and agreed to the proposal. And the princess with the long nose at once began to wash. She washed with all her might and main, and took the greatest pains, but the longer she washed and rubbed, the larger grew the spots.

"O, you don't know how to wash!" said her mother, the old troll-wife. "Just give it to me!" But no sooner had she taken the shirt in her hand, than it began to look worse, and the more she washed and rubbed, the larger and blacker grew the spots. Then the other troll-women had to come and wash; but the longer they washed the shirt the uglier it grew, and finally it looked as though it had been hanging in the smokestack.

"Why, all of you are worthless!" said the prince. "Outside the window sits a beggar-girl. I'm sure she is a better washer-woman than all of you put together. You, girl, come in here!" he cried out of the window; and when the maiden came in he said: "Do you think you can wash this shirt clean for me?"

"I do not know," answered the maiden, "but I will try." And no more had she dipped the shirt in the water than it turned as white as newly fallen snow, yes, even whiter.

"Indeed, and you are the one I want!" said the prince.

Then the old troll-woman grew so angry that she burst in two, and the princess with the long nose and the rest of the troll-pack probably burst in two as well, for I never heard anything more of them. The prince and his bride then freed all the Christians who had been kept captive in the castle, and packed up as much gold and silver as they could possibly take with them, and went far away from the castle that lies East of the sun and West of the moon.

NOTE

"East of the Sun and West of the Moon" (Asbjörnsen and Moe, N.F.E., p. 200, No. 41). The maiden's journeys with the winds are here recounted in a colorful and imaginative manner, and the motive of the washing out of the three drops of tallow is a delicate and ingenious development of the idea of the fateful candle.

XXIII

MURMUR GOOSE-EGG

ONCE upon a time there were five women who were standing in a field, mowing. Heaven had not given a single one of them a child, and each of them wanted to have one. And suddenly they saw a goose-egg of quite unheard-of size, well-nigh as large as a man's head. "I saw it first," said the one. "I saw it at the same time that you did," insisted another. "But I want it, for I saw it first of all," maintained a third. And thus they went on, and fought so about the egg that they nearly came to blows. Finally they agreed that it should belong to all five of them, and that all of them should sit on it, as a goose would do, and hatch out the little gosling. The first remained sitting on the egg for eight days, and hatched, and did not move or do a thing; and during this time the rest had to feed her and themselves as well. One of them grew angry because of this and scolded.

"You did not crawl out of the egg either before you could cry peep!" said the one who was sitting on the egg and hatching. "Yet I almost believe that a human child is going to slip out of the egg, for something is murmuring inside it without ever stopping: 'Herring and mush, porridge and milk,' " said

she. "And now you can sit on it for eight days, while we bring you food."

When the fifth day of the eight had passed, it was plain to her that there was a child in the egg, which kept on calling: "Herring and mush, porridge and milk," and so she punched a hole in the egg, and instead of a gosling out came a child, and it was quite disgustingly homely, with a big head and a small body, and no sooner had it crawled out than it began to cry: "Herring and mush, porridge and milk!" So they named the child Murmur Goose-Egg.

In spite of the child's homeliness, the women at first took a great deal of pleasure in him; but before long he grew so greedy that he devoured everything they had. When they cooked a dish of mush or a potful of porridge that was to do for all six of them, the child swallowed it all by himself. So they did not want to keep him any longer. "I have not had a single full meal since the changling crawled out," said one of them; and when Murmur Goose-Egg heard that, and the rest agreed, he said that he would gladly go his own gait, for "if they had no need of him, then he had no need of them," and with that he went off. Finally he came to a farmstead that lay in a rocky section, and asked for work. Yes, they needed a workman, and the master told him to gather up the stones in the field. Then Murmur Goose-Egg gathered up the stones in the field; he picked up some that were so large that a number of horses could not have dragged them, and large

and small, one and all, he put them in his pocket. Before long he had finished his work, and wanted to know what he was to do next.

"You have picked up the stones in the field?" said his master. "You cannot possibly have finished before you have really begun!"

But Murmur Goose-Egg emptied his pockets, and threw the stones on a pile. Then his master saw that he had finished his work, and that one would have to handle such a strong fellow with kid gloves. So he told him to come in and eat. That suited Murmur Goose-Egg, and he ate up everything that was to have supplied the master and his family, and the help, and then he was only half satisfied.

He was really a splendid worker; but a dangerous eater, like a bottomless cask, said the peasant. "Such a serving-man could eat up a poor peasant, house and ground, before he noticed it," said he. He had no more work for him, and the best thing to do would be to go to the king's castle.

So Murmur Goose-Egg went to the king, and was at once given a place, and there was enough to eat and drink in the castle. He was to be the errand-boy, and help the maids fetch wood and water, and do other odd jobs. So he asked what he was to do first.

For the time being he could chop fire-wood, said they. So Murmur Goose-Egg began to chop fire-wood, and hewed to the line in such fashion that the chips fairly flew. Before long he had chopped up all that there was, kindling wood and building wood,

beams and boards, and when he was through with it, he came and asked what he was to do now.

"You can finish chopping the fire-wood," said they.

"There is none left," said Murmur Goose-Egg.

That could not be possible, said the superintendent, and looked into the wood-bin. Yes, indeed, Murmur Goose-Egg had chopped up everything, large and small, beams and boards. That was very bad, and therefore the superintendent said that Murmur Goose-Egg should have nothing to eat until he had chopped down just as much wood in the forest as he had just chopped up for fire-wood.

Then Murmur Goose-Egg went into the smithy, and had the smith make an iron ax of five hundredweights. With that he went into the forest and began to chop. He chopped down big pine and fir trees, as thick as masts, and all that he found on the king's ground, as well as what he found on that of his neighbors. But he cut off neither the branches nor the tree-tops, so that all lay there as though felled by the storm. Then he loaded a sizable stack on the sled, and put to the horses. But they could not move the load from the spot, and when he took them by the heads, in order to pull them forward, he tore off their heads. So he unharnessed them, and left them lying in the field, and put himself to the sled, and went off alone with the load. When he came to the king's castle, there stood the king with the master carpenter in the entrance, and they were ready to give him a warm reception, because

of the destruction he had wrought in the forest. For the master carpenter had been there and seen the havoc he had made. But when Murmur Goose-Egg came along with half the forest, the king grew frightened as well as angry, and he thought that if Murmur was so strong, it would be best to handle him with care.

"Why, you are a splendid workman," said the king, "but tell me, how much do you really eat at once," he continued, "for I am sure you are hungry?"

If he were to have enough porridge, they would have to take twelve tons of meal to make it; but after he had eaten that, then he could wait a while, said Murmur Goose-Egg.

It took some time before so much porridge could be prepared, and in the meantime Murmur was to carry wood into the kitchen. So he piled the whole load of wood on a sled, but when he drove it through the door, he did not go to work about it very gently. The house nearly broke from its joints, and he well-nigh tore down the entire castle. When at last dinner was ready, they sent him out into the field, to call the help. He called so loudly that hill and vale reëchoed the sound. But still the people did not come quick enough to suit him. So he picked a quarrel with them, and killed twelve.

"You kill twelve of my people, and you eat for twelve times twelve of them but how many men's work can you do?" asked the king.

"I do the work of twelve times twelve, too," said

Murmur. When he had eaten, he was to go to the barn and thresh. So he pulled the beam out of the roof-tree, and made a flail out of it, and when the roof threatened to fall in, he took a pine-tree with all its boughs and branches, and set it up in place of the roof-beam. Then he threshed corn and hay and straw, all together, and it seemed as though a cloud hung over the royal castle.

When Murmur Goose-Egg had nearly finished threshing, the enemy broke into the land, and war began. Then the king told him to gather people about him, and go to meet the foe, and do battle with him, for he thought the enemy would probably kill him.

No, said Murmur Goose-Egg, he did not want to have the king's people killed, he would see that he dealt with the enemy himself.

All the better, thought the king, then I am sure to get rid of him. But he would need a proper club, said Murmur.

So they sent to the smith, and he forged a club of two hundred-weights. That would only do for a nut-cracker, said Murmur Goose-Egg. So he forged another that weighed six hundred-weights, and that would do to hammer shoes with, said Murmur Goose-Egg. But the smith told him that he and all his workmen together could not forge a larger one.

Then Murmur Goose-Egg went into the smithy himself, and forged himself a club of thirty hundred-weights, and it would have taken a hundred men just to turn it around on the anvil. This might do

at a pinch, said Murmur. Then he wanted a knapsack with provisions. It was sewn together out of fifteen ox-skins, and stuffed full of provisions, and then Murmur wandered down the hill with the knapsack on his back, and the club over his shoulder.

When he came near enough for the soldiers to see him, they sent to ask whether he had a mind to attack them.

"Just wait until I have eaten," said Murmur, and sat him down behind his knapsack to eat. But the enemy would not wait, and began to fire at him. And it fairly rained and hailed musket-balls all around Murmur.

"I don't care a fig for these blueberries," said Murmur Goose-Egg, and feasted on quite at ease. Neither lead nor iron could wound him, and his knapsack stood before him, and caught the bullets like a wall.

Then the enemy began to throw bombs at him, and shoot at him with cannon. He hardly moved when he was struck. "O, that's of no account!" said he.

But then a bomb flew into his wind-pipe. "Faugh!" said he, and spat it out again, and then came a chain-bullet and fell into his butter-plate, and another tore away the bit of bread from between his fingers.

Then he grew angry, stood up, took his club, pounded the ground with it, and asked whether they wanted to take the food from his mouth with the blueberries they were blowing out at him from their clumsy blow-pipes. Then he struck a few more

blows, so that the hills and valleys round about trembled, and all the enemy flew up into the air like chaff, and that was the end of the war.

When Murmur came back and asked for more work, the king was at a loss, for he had felt sure that now he was rid of him. So he knew of nothing better to do than to send him to the devil's place.

"Now you can go to the devil, and fetch the tribute from him," said the king. Murmur Goose-Egg went off with his knapsack on his back, and his club over his shoulder. He had soon reached the right spot; but when he got there the devil was away at a trial. There was no one home but his grandmother, and she said she had never yet heard anything about a tribute, and that he was to come back some other time.

"Yes, indeed, come again to-morrow," said he. "I know that old excuse!" But since he was there, he would stay there, for he had to take home the tribute, and he had plenty of time to wait. But when he had eaten all his provisions, he grew weary, and again demanded the tribute from the grandmother.

"You will get nothing from me, and that's as flat as the old fir-tree outside is fast," said the devil's grandmother. The fir-tree stood in front of the gate to the devil's place, and was so large that fifteen men could hardly girdle it with their arms. But Murmur climbed up into its top and bent and shook it to and fro as though it were a willow wand, and then asked the devil's grandmother once more whether she would now pay him the tribute.

"THERE MURMUR JUMPED FROM ONE MOUNTAIN-TOP TO ANOTHER."

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So she did not dare to refuse any longer, and brought out as much money as he could possibly carry in his knapsack. Then he set out for home with the tribute, and now no sooner had he gone than the devil came home, and when he learned that Murmur had taken along a big bag of money, he first beat his grandmother, and then hurried after Murmur. And he soon caught up to him, for he ran over sticks and stones, and sometimes flew in between; while Murmur had to stick to the highway with his heavy knapsack. But with the devil at his heels, he began to run as fast as he could, and stretched out the club behind him, to keep the devil from coming to close quarters. And thus they ran along, one behind the other; while Murmur held the shaft and the devil the end of the club, until they reached a deep valley. There Murmur jumped from one mountain-top to another, and the devil followed him so hotly that he ran into the club, fell down into the valley and broke his foot—and there he lay.

"There's your tribute!" said Murmur Goose-Egg, when he had reached the royal castle, and he flung down the knapsack full of money before the king, so that the whole castle tottered. The king thanked him kindly, and promised him a good reward, and a good character, if he wanted it; but Murmur only wanted more work to do.

"What shall I do now?" he asked. The king reflected for a while, and then he said Murmur should travel to the hill-troll, who had robbed him of the

sword of his ancestors. He lived in a castle by the sea, where no one ventured to go.

Murmur was given a few cart-loads of provisions in his big knapsack, and once more set out. Long he wandered, though, over field and wood, over hills and deep valleys, till he came to a great mountain where the troll lived who had robbed the king of the sword.

But the troll was not out in the open, and the mountain was closed, so Murmur could not get it. So he joined a party of stone-breakers, who were working at a mountainside, and worked along with them. They had never had such a helper, for Murmur hewed away at the rocks till they burst, and stone bowlders as large as houses came rolling down. But when he was about to rest and eat up the first cart-load of his provisions, it had already been eaten up. "I have a good appetite myself," said Murmur, "but whoever got hold of it has an even better one, for he has eaten up the bones as well!"

Thus it went the first day, and the second was no better. On the third day he went to work again, and took along the third cart-load, lay down behind it, and pretended to be sleeping.

Then a troll with seven heads came out of the hill, began to smack his lips, and eat of his provisions.

"Now the table is set, so now I am going to eat," said he.

"First we'll see about that," said Murmur, and hewed away at the troll so that the heads flew from his body.

Then he went into the hill out of which the troll had come, and inside stood a horse eating out of a barrel of glowing ashes, while behind him stood a barrel filled with oats.

"Why don't you eat out of the barrel of oats?" asked Murmur Goose-Egg.

"Because I cannot turn around," said the horse.

"I will turn you around," said Murmur Goose-Egg.

"Tear my head off instead," pleaded the horse.

Murmur did so, and then the horse turned into a fine-looking man. He said that he had been enchanted, and turned into a horse by the troll. Then he helped Murmur look for the sword, which the troll had hidden under the bed. But in the bed lay the troll's grandmother, and she was snoring.

They went home by water, and just as they sailed off the old troll grandmother came after them; but she could not get at them, hence she commenced to drink, so that the water went down and grew lower. But at last she could not drink up the whole sea, and so she burst.

When they came ashore, Murmur sent to the king, and had him told to have the sword fetched; but though the king sent four horses, they could not move it from the spot. He sent eight, he sent twelve, but the sword remained where it was, and could not be moved from the spot by any means. Then Murmur Goose-Egg took it up, and carried it alone.

The king could not believe his eyes when he saw Murmur once more; but he was very friendly and

promised him gold and green forests. But when Murmur asked for more work, he told him to travel to his troll's castle, where no one dared go, and to remain there until he had built a bridge across the sound, so that people could cross. If he could do that, he would reward him well, yes, he would even give him his daughter, said the king. He would attend to it, said Murmur.

Yet no human being had ever returned thence alive; all who had gotten so far, lay on the ground dead, and crushed to a jelly, and the king thought, when sending him there, that he would never see him again.

But Murmur set out. He took with him his knapsack full of provisions, and a properly turned and twisted block of pine-wood, as well as an ax, a wedge and some wooden chips.

When he reached the sound, the river was full of drifting ice, and it roared like a waterfall. But he planted his legs firmly on the ground, and waded along until he got across. When he had warmed himself and satisfied his hunger, he wanted to sleep; but a tumult and rumbling started, as though the whole castle were to be turned upside down. The gate flew wide open, and Murmur saw nothing but a pair of yawning jaws that reached from the threshold to the top of the door.

"Let's see who you may be? Perhaps you are an old friend of mine," said Murmur. And sure enough, it was Master Devil. Then they played cards together. The devil would gladly have won

back some of the tribute Murmur had forced from his grandmother for the king. Yet, no matter how he played, Murmur always won; for he made a cross on the cards. And after he had won all the devil had with him, the latter had to give him some of the gold and silver that was in the castle.

In the midst of their game the fire went out, so that they could no longer tell the cards apart.

"Now we must split wood," said Murmur. He hewed into the block of pine-wood with his ax, and drove in the wedge, but the tree-stump was tough, and would not split at once, though Murmur gave himself all manner of pains.

"You are supposed to be strong," he said to the devil. "Spit on your hands, slap in your claws here, and pull the block apart, so that I can see what you can do!"

The devil obediently thrust both hands into the split, and tore and clawed with all his might; but suddenly Murmur Goose-Egg knocked out the wedge, and there the devil was caught in a vice, while Murmur belabored his back with the ax. The devil wailed, and begged Murmur to let him go; but Murmur would hear nothing of it until he had promised never to come back and make a nuisance of himself again. Besides that, he had to promise to build a bridge over the sound, on which one could go back and forth at all seasons of the year. And the bridge was to be completed immediately after the breaking up of the ice-drift.

"Alas!" said the devil, but there was nothing

for it but to promise if he wished to go free. Yet he made one condition, that he was to have the first soul that crossed the bridge as sound-toll.

He could have it, said Murmur. Then he let the devil out, and he ran straight home. But Murmur lay down and slept until far into the following day.

Then the king came to see whether Murmur Goose-Egg were lying crushed on the ground, or had merely been badly beaten. He had to wade through piles of money before he could reach the bed. The money was stacked up high along the walls in heaps and in bags, and Murmur lay in the bed and snored.

"May heaven help me and my daughter!" cried the king, when he saw that Murmur Goose-Egg was in the best of health. Yes, and no one could deny that everything had been well and thoroughly done, said the king; but there could be no talk of marriage as long as the bridge had not been built.

Then one day the bridge was finished; and on it stood the devil, ready to collect the toll promised him.

Murmur Goose-Egg wanted the king to be the first to try the bridge with him; but the king had no mind to do so, therefore Murmur himself mounted a horse, and swung up the fat dairy-maid from the castle before him on the saddle-bow—she looked almost like a gigantic block of wood—and dashed across the bridge with her so that the planks fairly thundered.

"Where is my sound-toll? Where is the soul?" cried the devil. "Sitting in this block of wood! If

you want her, you must spit on your hands and catch hold of her," said Murmur Goose-Egg. "No, thank you! If she does not catch hold of me, then I'll certainly not catch hold of her," said the devil. "You caught me in a vice once, but you can't fool me a second time," said he, and flew straight home to his grandmother, and since then nothing more has been heard or seen of him.

But Murmur Goose-Egg hurried back to the castle and asked for the reward the king had promised him. And when the king hesitated and began to make all sorts of excuses, in order not to have to keep his promise, Murmur said it would be best to have a substantial knapsackful of provisions made ready, since now he, Murmur, was going to take his reward himself. This the king did, and when the knapsack was ready, Murmur took the king along with him in front of the castle, and gave him a proper shove, so that he flew high up into the air. And he threw the knapsack up after him, so that he would not be left altogether without provisions; and if he has not come down yet, then he, together with the knapsack, is floating between heaven and earth to this very day.

NOTE

"Murmur Goose-Egg" (Asbjörnsen, N.F.E., p. 172, No. 96. From Gudbrandsdal, title and introduction after a variant from the vicinity of Christiania) is predestined to great deeds from birth, like his Swedish counterpart Knös. This giant fellow, who fears neither death nor the devil, if he only has enough to eat, is of old a favorite figure in Norse fairy-tale. It is by means of similar giant fooleries

that Thor, the god of the Norwegian peasant, was made ridiculous, and shown up as a braggart; and in the Song of Harbord he is mocked because o his fondness for herring and mush, the very dish Murmur demands before he crawls from the egg. Thor is also credited with a trip to the nether world, just as Murmur is sent to the devil in hell, to collect a tribute.

XXIV

THE TROLL-WIFE

ONCE upon a time, long, long years ago, there lived a well-to-do old couple on a homestead up in Hadeland. They had a son, who was a dragoon, a big, handsome fellow. They had a pasture in the hills, and the hut was not like most of the herdsmen's huts; but was well and solidly built, and even had a chimney, a roof and a window. And there they spent the summer; but when they came back home in the fall, the wood-cutters and huntsmen and fishermen, and whoever else had business in the woods at that time, noticed that the mountain folk had carried on its tricks with their herd. And among the mountain folk was a maiden who was so beautiful that her like had never been seen.

The son had often heard tell of her, and one fall, when his parents had already come home from the mountain pasture, he put on his full uniform, saddled his service horse, thrust his pistols in the holsters, and thus rode up into the hills. When he rode toward the pasture, such a fire burned in the herdsman's hut that it lit up every road, and then he knew that the mountain folk were inside. So he tied his horse to a pine-tree, took a pistol from its holster, crept up to the hut, and peeped through the

window. And there sat an old man and a woman who were quite crooked and shriveled up with age, and so unspeakably ugly that he had never seen anything like it in his life; but with them was a maiden, and she was so surpassingly beautiful that he fell in love with her at once, and felt that he could not live without her. All had cow's tails, and the lovely maiden, too. And he could see that they had only just arrived, for everything was in disorder. The maiden was busy washing the ugly old man, and the woman was building a fire under the great cheese-kettle on the hearth.

At that moment the dragoon flung open the door, and shot off his pistol right above the maiden's head, so that she tottered and fell to the ground. And then she grew every bit as ugly as she had been beautiful before, and she had a nose as long as a pistol-case.

"Now you may take her, for now she belongs to you!" said the old man. But the dragoon stood as though rooted to the spot; stood where he stood, and could not take a single step, either forward or backward. Then the old man began to wash the girl; and she looked a little better; her nose was only half its original size, and her ugly cow's tail was tied back; but she was not as handsome, and any one who said so would not have been telling the truth.

"Now she is yours, my proud dragoon! Take her up before you on your horse, and ride into town and marry her. And you need only set the table

for us in the little room in the bake-house; for we do not want to be with the other wedding-guests," said the old monster, her father, "but when the dishes make the round, you can stop in where we are."

He did not dare do anything else, and took her up before him on his horse, and made ready to marry her. But before she went to church, the bride begged one of the bridesmaids to stand close behind her, so that no one could see her tail fall off when the priest joined their hands.

So the wedding was celebrated, and when the dishes made the round, the bridegroom went out into the room where the table had been set for the old folk from the mountain. And at that time there was nothing to be seen there; but after the wedding-guests had gone, there was so much gold and silver, and such a pile of money lying there, as he had never seen together before.

For a long time all went well. Whenever guests came, his wife laid the table for the old folk in the bake-house, and on each occasion so much money was left lying there, that before long they did not know what to do with it all. But ugly she was, and ugly she remained, and he was heartily weary of her. So it was bound to happen that he sometimes flew into a rage, and threatened her with cuffs and blows. Once he wanted to go to town, and since it was fall, and the ground already frozen, the horse had first to be shod. So he went into the smithy—for he himself was a notable farrier—but, no matter

what he did, the horse-shoe was either too large or too small, and would not fit at all. He had no other horse at home, and he toiled away until noon and on into the afternoon. "Will you never make an end of your shoeing?" asked his wife. "You are not a very good husband; but you are a far worse farrier. I see there is nothing left for me but to go into the smithy myself and shoe the horse. This shoe is too large, you should have made it smaller, and that one is too small, you should have made it larger."

She went into the smithy, and the first thing she did was to take the horse-shoe in both hands and bend it straight.

"There, look at it," said she, "that is how you must do it." And with that she bent it together again as though it were made of lead. "Now hold up the horse's leg," said she, and the horse-shoe fitted to a hair, so that the best farrier could not have bettered it.

"You have a great deal of strength in your fingers," said her husband, and he looked at her.

"Do you think so?" was her reply. "What would have happened to me had you been as strong? But I love you far too dearly ever to use my strength against you," said she.

And from that day on he was the best of husbands.

NOTE

"The Troll-Wife" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr*, I, p. 77. From Hadeland, told by a farrier who knew a number of fairy-tales)

deals with a marriage between a Christian and a Troll. Strange to say, the woman is kind and gentle beyond all reproach, while her husband grows less kind and more brutal, and does not improve until his wife shows that troll strength and skill are still at her command.

XXV

THE KING'S HARES

ONCE upon a time there was a man who lived in the little back room. He had given up his estate to the heir; but in addition he had three sons, who were named Peter, Paul and Esben, who was the youngest. All three hung around at home and would not work, for they had it too easy, and they thought themselves too good for anything like work, and nothing was good enough for them. Finally Peter once heard that the king wanted a shepherd for his hares, and he told his father he would apply for the position, as it would just suit him, seeing that he wished to serve no one lower in rank than the king. His father, it is true, was of the opinion that there might be other work that would suit him better, for whoever was to herd hares would have to be quick and spry, and not a sleepy-head, and when the hares took to their heels in all directions, it was a dance of another kind than when one skipped about a room. But it was of no use. Peter insisted, and would have his own way, took his knapsack, and shambled down hill. After he had gone a while, he saw an old woman who had got her nose wedged in a tree-stump while chopping wood, and when Peter saw her jerking and

pulling away, trying to get out, he burst into loud laughter.

"Don't stand there and laugh in such a stupid way," said the woman, "but come and help a poor, feeble old woman. I wanted to split up some firewood, and caught my nose here, and here I have been standing for more than a hundred years, pulling and jerking, without a bit of bread to chew in all that time," said she.

Then Peter had to laugh all the harder. He found it all very amusing, and said that if she had already been standing there a hundred years, then she could probably hold out for another hundred years or more.

When he came to court they at once took him on as a herdsman. The place was not bad, there was good food, and good wages, and the chance of winning the princess besides; yet if no more than a single one of the king's hares were to be lost, they would cut three red strips from his back, and throw him into the snake-pit.

As long as Peter was on the common or in the enclosure, he kept his hares together nicely, but later, when they reached the forest, they ran away from him across the hills. Peter ran after them with tremendous leaps, as long as he thought he could catch even a single hare, but when the very last one had vanished, his breath was gone, and he saw no more of them. Toward noon he went home, taking his time about it, and when he reached the enclosure, he looked around for them on all sides,

but no hares came. And then, when he came to the castle, there stood the king with the knife in his hand. He cut three red strips from his back, and cast him into the snake-pit.

After a while Paul decided to go to the castle and herd the king's hares. His father told him what he had told Peter, and more besides; but he insisted on going, and would not listen, and he fared neither better nor worse than Peter had. The old woman stood and pulled and jerked at her nose in the tree-trunk, and he laughed, found it very amusing, and let her stand there and torment herself. He was at once taken into service, but the hares all ran away across the hills, though he pursued them, and worked away like a shepherd dog in the sun, and when he came back to the castle in the evening minus his hares, there stood the king with the knife in his hand, cut three broad strips from his back, rubbed in pepper and salt, and flung him into the snake-pit.

Then, after some time had passed, the youngest decided to set out to herd the king's hares, and told his father of his intention. He thought that would be just the work for him, to loaf about in forest and field, look for strawberry patches, herd a flock of hares, and lie down and sleep in the sun between times. His father thought that there was other work that would suit him better, and that even if he fared no worse than his brothers, it was quite certain that he would fare no better. Whoever herded the king's hares must not drag along as though he had lead in his soles, or like a fly on a limerod; and that when

the hares took to their heels, it was a horse of another color from catching flees with gloved hands; whoever wanted to escape with a whole back, would have to be more than quick and nimble, and swifter than a bird. But there was nothing he could do. Esben merely kept on saying that he wanted to go to court and serve the king, for he would not take service with any lesser master, said he; and he would see to the hares, they could not be much worse than a herd of goats or of calves. And with that he took his knapsack and strolled comfortably down the hill.

After he had wandered a while, and began to feel a proper hunger, he came to the old woman who was wedged by the nose in the tree-trunk and who was pulling and jerking away, in order to get loose.

"Good day, mother," said Esben, "and why are you worrying yourself so with your nose, you poor thing?" "No one has called me mother for the last hundred years," said the old woman, "but come and help me out, and give me a bite to eat; for I have not had a bit to eat in all that time. And I will do something for your sake as well," said she.

Yes, no doubt she would need something to eat and drink badly, said Esben.

Then he hewed the tree-trunk apart, so that she got her nose out of the cleft, sat down to eat, and shared with her. The old woman had a good appetite, and she received a good half of his provisions.

When they were through she gave Esben a whistle which had the power that if he blew into one end,

whatever he wished scattered was scattered to all the winds, and when he blew into the other, all came together again. And if the whistle passed from his possession, it would return as soon as he wished it back.

"That is a wonderful whistle!" thought Esben.

When he came to the castle, they at once took him on as a shepherd; the place was not bad, he was to have food and wages, and should he manage to herd the king's hares without losing one of them, he might possibly win the princess; but if he lost so much as a single hare, and no matter how small it might be, then they would cut three red strips from his back, and the king was so sure of his case that he went right off to whet his knife. It would be a simple matter to herd the hares, thought Esben; for when they went off they were as obedient as a herd of sheep, and so long as they were on the common, and in the enclosure, they even marched in rank and file. But when they reached the forest, and noon-time came, and the sun burned down on hill and dale, they all took to their heels and ran away across the hills.

"Hallo, there! So you want to run away!" called Esben, and blew into one end of his whistle, and then they scattered the more quickly to all the ends of the earth. But when he had reached an old charcoal-pit, he blew into the other end of his whistle, and before he knew it the hares were back again, and standing in rank and file so he could review them, just like a regiment of soldiers on the drill-ground.

"THE KING RECKONED AND ADDED THEM UP, AND COUNTED WITH HIS FINGERS."

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"That is a splendid whistle!" thought Esben; lay down on a sunny hillock, and fell asleep. The hares were left to their own devices, and played until evening; then he once more whistled them together, and took them along to the castle like a herd of sheep.

The king and queen and the princess, too, stood in the hall-way, and wondered what sort of a fellow this was, who could herd hares without losing a single one. The king reckoned and added them up, and counted with his fingers, and then added them up again; but not even the teeny-weeniest hare was missing. "He is quite a chap, he is," said the princess.

The following day he again went to the forest, and herded his hares; but while he lay in all comfort beside a strawberry patch, they sent out the chamber-maid from the castle to him, and she was to find out how he managed to herd the king's hares.

He showed her his whistle, and blew into one end, and all the hares darted away across the hills in all directions, and then he blew into the other, and they came trotting up from all sides, and once more stood in rank and file. "That is a wonderful whistle," said the chamber-maid. She would gladly give him a hundred dollars, if he cared to sell it.

"Yes, it is a splendid whistle," said Esben, "and I will not sell it for money. But if you give me a hundred dollars, and a kiss with every dollar to boot, then I might let you have it."

Yes, indeed, that would suit her right down to the

ground; she would gladly give him two kisses with every dollar, and feel grateful, besides.

So she got the whistle, but when she reached the castle, the whistle disappeared all of a sudden. Esben had wished it back again, and toward evening he came along, driving his hares like a herd of sheep. The king reckoned and counted and added, but all to no purpose, for not the least little hare was missing.

When Esben was herding his hares the third day, they sent the princess to him to get away his pipe from him. She was tickled to death, and finally offered him two hundred dollars if he would let her have the whistle, and would also tell her what she had to do in order to fetch it safely home with her.

"Yes, it is a very valuable whistle," said Esben, "and I will not sell it," but at last, as a favor to her, he said he would let her have it if she gave him two hundred dollars, and a kiss for every dollar to boot. But if she wanted to keep it, why, she must take good care of it, for that was her affair.

"That is a very high price for a hare-whistle," said the princess, and she really shrank from kissing him, "but since we are here in the middle of the forest, where no one can see or hear us, I'll let it pass, for I positively must have the whistle," said she. And when Esben had pocketed the price agreed upon, she received the whistle, and held it tightly clutched in her hand all the way home; yet when she reached the castle, and wanted to show it, it disappeared out of her hands. On the following day

the queen herself set out, and she felt quite sure that she would succeed in coaxing the whistle away from him.

She was stingier, and only offered fifty dollars; but she had to raise her bid until she reached three hundred. Esben said it was a magnificent whistle, and that the price was a beggarly one; but seeing that she was the queen, he would let it pass. She was to pay him three hundred dollars, and for every dollar she was to give him a buss to boot, then she should have the whistle. And he was paid in full as agreed, since as regards the busses the queen was not so stingy.

When she had the whistle in her hands, she tied it fast, and hid it well, but she fared not a whit better than either of the others; when she wanted to show the whistle it was gone, and in the evening Esben came home, driving his hares as though they were a well-trained flock of sheep.

"You are stupid women!" said the king. "I suppose I will have to go to him myself if we really are to obtain this trumpery whistle. There seems to be nothing else left to do!" And the following day, when Esben was once more herding his hares, the king followed him, and found him at the same place where the women had bargained with him.

They soon became good friends, and Esben showed him the whistle, and blew into one end and the other, and the king thought the whistle very pretty, and finally insisted on buying it, even though it cost him a thousand dollars.

"Yes, it is a magnificent whistle," said Esben, "and I would not sell it for money. But do you see that white mare over yonder?" said he, and pointed into the forest.

"Yes, she belongs to me, that is my Snow Witch!" cried the king, for he knew her very well.

"Well, if you will give me a thousand dollars, and kiss the white mare that is grazing on the moor by the big pine, to boot, then you can have my whistle!" said Esben.

"Is that the only price at which you will sell?" asked the king.

"Yes," said Esben.

"But at least may I not put a silken handkerchief between?" asked the king.

This was conceded him, and thus be obtained the whistle. He put it in the purse in his pocket, and carefully buttoned up the pocket. Yet when he reached the castle, and wanted to take it out, he was in the same case as the women, for he no longer had the whistle. And in the evening Esben came home with his herd of hares, and not the least little hare was missing.

The king was angry, and furious because he had made a fool of them all, and had swindled the king's self out of the whistle into the bargain, and now he wanted to do away with Esben. The queen was of the same opinion, and said it was best to behead such a knave when he was caught in the act.

Esben thought this neither fair nor just; for he

had only done what he had been asked to do, and had defended himself as best he knew how.

But the king said that this made no difference to him; yet if Esben could manage to fill the big brewing-cauldron till it ran over, he would spare his life.

The job would be neither long nor hard, said Esben, he thought he could warrant that, and he began to tell about the old woman with her nose in the tree-trunk, and in between he said, "I must make up plenty of stories, to fill the cauldron,"—and then he told of the whistle, and the chamber-maid who came to him and wanted to buy the whistle for a hundred dollars, and about all the kisses that she had had to give him to boot, up on the hillock by the forest; and then he told about the princess, how she had come and kissed him so sweetly for the whistle's sake, because no one could see or hear it in the forest—"I must make up plenty of stories, in order to fill the cauldron," said Esben. Then he told of the queen, and of how stingy she had been with her money, and how liberal with her busses—"for I must make up plenty of stories in order to fill the cauldron," said Esben.

"But I think it must be full now!" said the queen.

"O, not a sign of it!" said the king.

Then Esben began to tell how the king had come to him, and about the white mare who was grazing on the moor, "and since he insisted on having the whistle he had to—he had to—well, with all due respect, I have to make up plenty of stories in order to fill the cauldron," said Esben.

"Stop, stop! It is full, fellow!" cried the king. "Can't you see that it is running over?"

The king and the queen were of the opinion that it would be best for Esben to receive the princess and half the kingdom; there did not seem anything else to do.

"Yes, it was a magnificent whistle!" said Esben.

NOTE

"The King's Hares" (Asbjörnsen, N.F.E., p. 190, No. 98. After different variants from Röken, Aadal, Bier and Asker, Riugerike and Hardanger) is the story of the cauldron full of lies, which has probably found special favor in Norway because of its outcome, not very flattering for the king and queen. It is noticeable that in Northern fairy-tales those kings who will not give up their daughters to the heroes at any cost are handled with considerable disrespect.

XXVI

HELGE-HAL IN THE BLUE HILL

ONCE upon a time there was a sinister old couple, who lived out under the open sky. All that they had were three sons, an old cook-pot, an old frying-pan, and an old cat. Then the man died, and after a time his wife died, too. Now their estate was to be divided. So the oldest took the old cook-pot, and the second took the old frying-pan, and Ebe Ashpeter had no choice. He had to take the old cat, and they did not ask him whether he wanted to or not.

"Brother Peter can scrape out the cook-pot after he has loaned it out," said Ebe. "Brother Paul gets a crust of bread when he lends out his frying-pan; but what am I to do with this wretched cat?" And he was angry and envious. Yet he scratched the cat and stroked it, and this pleased the cat so that she began to purr, and raised her tail in the air.

"Wait, wait, I'll help you yet," said the cat, "wait, wait, I'll help you yet!"

There was nothing to bite or break in the hut. Brother Peter and Brother Paul had each of them gone off in a different direction. So Ebe set out, too, with the cat in the lead, himself following; but after a time he turned and went home again, to see whether the floor had been swept, and the cat tripped

on alone. After she had gone her way, tipp, tapp, tipp, tapp, for a while, she came to a great rock, and there she met an enormous herd of reindeer. The cat crept softly around the herd, and then with one leap sprang between the horns of the finest buck.

"If you do not go where I want you to, I'll scratch out your eyes, and drive you over rock and precipice!" said she. So the buck did not dare do anything save what the cat wished, and off they went over stick and stone, from cliff to cliff, close by Ebe, who was just polishing the door-sill of his house, and with one bound right into the castle.

"I am to deliver a kind greeting from Ebe, and ask whether my lord king might care to have this buck reindeer to drive," said the cat. Yes, he could make good use of such a young, handsome animal, some time, when he had occasion to drive out to visit a neighboring king.

"This Ebe must be a proud and powerful lord," said the king, "if he can make me such presents."

"Yes, he is the greatest lord in all your land and kingdom," said the cat, but no matter how many questions the king asked, he learned nothing more.

"Tell him that I am much obliged," said the king, and he sent him a whole cart-load of handsome presents. But Ebe looked past them and paid no attention to them.

"Brother Peter can scrape out his cook-pot when he has loaned it out, and Brother Paul gets a crust of bread when he lends out his frying-pan; but what

am I to do with this wretched cat!" said he, and felt angry and envious; but still he scratched the cat, and stroked her, and this pleased her so much that she began to purr, and raised her tail in the air.

"Wait, wait, I will help you yet," said the cat, "wait, wait, I will help you yet!"

The next day they both set out again, the cat in the lead, and Ebe following. After a while he turned back to see whether the folding-table at home had been scoured. And the cat tripped on alone. After she had gone her way, tipp, tapp, tipp, tapp, for a while, she came to a dense forest slope. There she found an enormous herd of elk. The cat crept softly up, and suddenly there she sat between the horns of one of the stateliest of the bull elks.

"If you do not go where I want you to, I will scratch out your eyes, and drive you over rock and precipice!" said the cat. The elk did not dare do anything save what the cat wished, and so off they went, like lightning, over stick and stone, from cliff to cliff, right past Ebe, who stood before the house scouring the shutters, and with one bound into the king's castle.

"I am to deliver a kind greeting from Ebe, and ask whether my lord king might not care to have this bull elk for courier service." It was quite clear that should the king want a swift messenger, some time, he could not find a swifter in all his kingdom.

"This Ebe must be a most distinguished lord, since he finds such presents for me," said the king.

"Yes, indeed, one might call him a distinguished

lord," said the cat, "his wealth is without end or limit." But no matter how many other questions the king asked, he received no more explicit information.

"Tell him that I am much obliged, and to do me the honor to call when he is passing here some time," said the king, and sent him a robe as handsome as the one he himself was wearing, and three cartloads of handsome presents. But Ebe did not even want to put on the royal robe, and hardly looked at the other presents.

"Brother Peter can scrape out his cook-pot when he has loaned it out, Brother Paul gets a crust of bread when he lends out his frying-pan; but of what use is this wretched cat to me!" he said, in spite of all. Yet he stroked the cat, and pressed her to his cheek, and scratched her, and this pleased the cat so very much that she purred more than on the other occasions, and stuck her tail up into the air as straight as a rod.

"Wait, wait, I will help you yet," said the cat, "wait, wait, I will help you yet!"

On the third day they set out again, the cat in the lead, and Ebe following. After a time it occurred to him to go back and let the mice out of the house, so that they would not be altogether starved in the old hut; and the cat tripped on alone. After she had gone her way, tipp, tapp, tipp, tapp, for a while, she came to a dense pine forest, and there she met a father bear, a mother bear and a baby bear. The cat crept softly up to them, and all at once she was hanging by her claws to the father bear's head.

"If you do not go where I want you to, I will scratch out your eyes, and drive you over rock and precipice!" said the cat, and spit and arched her back. Then the father bear did not dare do anything save what the cat wished, and now they dashed past Ebe, who had just carried all the young mice over the threshold, like a storm, over stick and stone, from cliff to cliff, so that the earth trembled and shook. The king was just standing in the hallway, and was not a little surprised to see such guests arriving.

"I am to deliver a kind greeting from Ebe, and ask whether my lord king might not care to have this bear for a general or royal counselor," said the cat. The king was more than pleased to secure such a creature for his nearest adviser, who could doubt it.

"Tell him that I am much obliged, but that I do not at all know how to show my appreciation," said the king.

"Well, he would like to marry your youngest daughter!" said the cat.

"Yes, but that is asking a good deal," said the king. "He really ought to pay me a visit."

"Ebe does not enter such plain houses," said the cat.

"Has he a handsomer castle than this?" asked the king.

"Handsomer? Why, your castle seems like the shabbiest hut in comparison with his!" was the cat's reply.

"You dare come into my presence, and tell me that there is some one living in my kingdom who is more handsomely housed than I, the king!" shouted the king, beside himself with rage. He came near wringing the cat's neck.

"You might wait until you see it," said the cat. And the king said yes, he would wait. "But if you have told me a falsehood, you shall die, and though you had seven lives," said he.

In the morning the king and the whole court set out to travel to Ebe Ashpeter's castle. The cat was in the little hut, and called for Ebe, thinking it would be best if both of them got underway an hour earlier. After they had gone a while, they met some folk who were herding sheep; and the sheep were bleating and grazing over the whole plain. They were as large as full-grown calves, and their wool was so long that it dragged along the ground after them. "To whom do the sheep belong?" asked the cat. "To Helge-Hal in the Blue Hill," said the shepherds.

"The court is coming past in a moment," said the cat, "and if then you do not at once say that they belong to Ebe, I will scratch out your eyes, and drive you over rock and precipice!" said the cat, and spat and arched her back, and showed her teeth. Then the shepherds were so frightened that they at once promised to do as the cat had ordered.

"But to whom do all these sheep belong?" asked the king, when he came by with the court somewhat

later. "They are every bit as handsome as my own!"

"They belong to Ebe," said the shepherds.

Then the cat and Ebe wandered on for a while, and came to a dense forest slope. There they met folk who were tending goats. The goats skipped and leaped about everywhere, and gave such fine milk that better could no where be found.

"To whom do the goats belong?" asked the cat.

"To Helge-Hal in the Blue Hill," said the herdsmen. Then the cat again went through her ferocious preparations, and the herdsmen were so frightened that they did not dare oppose her wishes.

"Now who in the world can be the owner of so many goats?" asked the king. "I myself have none finer!"

"They belong to Ebe," said the herdsmen.

Then they wandered on for a while, and met folk who were tending cows: wherever one looked the cows lowed and glistened, and each yielded milk enough for three. When the cat heard that these herdsmen were also in the service of Helge-Hal of the Blue Hill, she spat once more, and arched her back, and then all the herdsmen were ready that moment to say what she wished.

"But in heaven's name, to whom do all these beautiful cattle belong?" asked the king. "There are no such cattle in my whole kingdom!"

"They belong to Lord Ebe," said the herdsmen.

Then they wandered on for a long, long time. At

last they came to a great plain, and there they met horse-herders; and horses whinnied and disported themselves over the whole plain, and their coats were so fine that they glistened as though gilded, and each horse was worth a whole castle.

"For whom do you herd these horses?" asked the cat.

"For Helge-Hal in the Blue Hill," the herders replied.

"Well, the court will come by here in a little while," said the cat, "and if you do not say you are herding them for Ebe, I will scratch out your eyes, and drive you over rock and precipice!" said the cat, and she spat, and showed her teeth and claws, and grew so angry her hair stood up all along her back. Then the herders were terribly frightened, and did not dare do anything but what the cat wished.

"But in the name of heaven, to whom do all these horses belong?" asked the king, when he came by with his court.

"They belong to Ebe," said the herders.

"I never have seen or heard anything like it in all my life!" cried the king. "This Ebe is such a distinguished lord that it is past my understanding!"

The cat and Ebe had long since gone on their way, and had wandered far and ever farther over hill and rock. In the evening, at dusk, they came to a royal castle that glittered and shimmered as though it were of the purest silver and gold—which it was.

Yet it was gloomy and depressing, and lonely and barren there, and nowhere was there a sign of life.

Here they went in, and the cat stood with a cake of rye meal just below the door. Suddenly there came a thundering and a thumping so that the earth trembled, and the whole castle shook, and that was the troll who was coming home. And suddenly all was quiet again, and before they knew it, Helge-Hal in the Blue Hill had thrust his three great horrible heads in at the door.

"Let me in! Let me in!" he cried, so that every one shivered. "Wait, wait a bit while I tell you what the rye had to go through before he was made into this cake," said the cat, and spoke to him in the sweetest way. "First he was threshed, and then he was beaten, and then he was pounded, and then he was thumped, and then he was thrown from one wall to another, and then he was sifted through a sieve. . . . "

"Let me in! Let me in, you chatterbox!" cried the troll, and he was so furious that the sparks flew from him.

"Wait a bit, wait a bit. I will tell you what the rye had to go through before he was made into this cake!" said the cat, and he spoke to him still more sweetly.

"First he was threshed, and then he was beaten, and then he was pounded, and then he was thumped, and then he was thrown from one wall to another, and then he was sifted through a sieve, and shaken here and there, and then he was put on the drying-

board, and then in the stove, until it grew so hot that he puffed up more and more, and wanted to get out, but could not," said the cat, and took her time.

"Get out of the way and let me in!" cried the troll once more, and nearly burst with rage; but the cat acted as though she did not hear him, and talked down the blue from the sky, and went up and down the while, and whenever the troll tried to come in, she met him beneath the door with the cake.

"O, but do take a look at the shining maiden coming up there behind the mountain!" said the cat, after she had talked at length about the sufferings of the rye. And Helge-Hal in the Blue Hill turned his three heads around in order to see the beautiful maiden, too. Then the sun rose, and the troll stiffened into stone. Now Ebe obtained all the riches that the troll had possessed, the sheep and goats, the cows and all the spirited horses, and the handsome golden castle, and some big bags of money besides.

"Here come the king and all his court," said the cat. "Just go out before the door and receive them!" So Ebe got up and went to meet them.

"You are indeed a very distinguished lord!" said the king to him. "So far as I am concerned you may have the youngest princess!"

Then they started brewing and baking on a large scale in the greatest haste, and everything was made ready for the wedding. On the first day of the feast the cat came and begged the bridegroom to cut off

her head. This he did not at all want to do; but the cat spat and showed her teeth, and then Ebe did not dare disobey her. But when the head fell to the ground, the cat turned into a most handsome prince. He married the second princess, and as the wedding procession was on its way to church, they met a third prince who was looking for a wife, and he took the oldest princess. Then they all three celebrated their weddings so that the story went the rounds in twelve kingdoms.

"Spin, span, spun,
Now our tale is done!"

NOTE

The tale of "Helge-Hal in the Blue Hill" (Bergh, No. 2, p. 19) is delightfully told. There is the timid, abidingly helpless nit-wit, and the wise and energetic cat, who is quite at home in the ancient wisdom that enables her to render trolls harmless. Their attention must be held through the night by means of some pretext, a meaningless tale, for instance, until the first ray of the rising sun falls on them, when they turn to stone, or have to burst. In the Edda this is what happens to the dwarf Alvis, so full of sinister lore.

XXVII

THE LORD OF THE HILL AND JOHN BLESSOM

JOHN BLESSOM once upon a time had gone down to Copenhagen to carry on a suit at law, for in those days one could not get justice in the land of Norroway; and if a man wanted his rights, there was nothing left for him to do but to travel to Copenhagen. This is what Blessom had done, and what his son did after him, for he, too, carried on a law-suit. Now it chanced that on Christmas Eve John had had speech with the gentleman in authority, and had attended to his business, and was going along the street in a low-spirited manner, for he was homesick. And as he went along, a man from Vaage, in a white blouse, with a knapsack, and buttons as big as silver dollars, passed him. He was a large, heavily-built man. It seemed to Blessom that he must know him; but he was walking very fast.

"You are walking very fast," said John.

"Yes, but then I'm in a hurry," answered the man. "I have to get back to Vaage this very evening."

"I only wish that I could get there!" sighed John.

"You can stand on the runner of my sledge," said the man, "for I have a horse that covers a mile in twelve steps."

So they set out, and Blessom had all that he could do to hold fast to the runner of the sledge; for they went through weather and wind, and he could see neither heaven nor earth.

Once they stopped and rested. He could not tell exactly where it was, but when they began to hurry on again, he thought that he spied a skull on a pole. After they had gone on a while, John Blessom began to freeze.

"Alas, I forgot one of my gloves where we stopped, and now my hand is freezing!" said he.

"Well, Blessom, you'll have to make the best of it," said the man. "We are not far from Vaage now. When we stopped to rest we had covered half the way."

When they crossed the Finnebridge, the man stopped and set John down.

"Now you are not far from home," said he, "but you must promise me that you will not look around, when you hear a roaring and notice a flare of light."

John promised, and thanked him for the quick journey. The man drove off on his way, and John crossed the hill to his home. As he went he heard a roaring in the Jutulsberg, and the path before him suddenly grew so bright that one could have picked a needle from the ground. And he forgot what he had promised, and turned his head to see what was happening. There stood the giant gate of the Jutulsberg wide open, and out of it streamed a light and radiance as of thousands of candles. In the midst of it all stood the giant, and he was the man

with whom he had driven. But from that time forward John's head was twisted, and so it remained as long as he lived.

NOTE

"The Lord of the Hill and John Blessom" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr* I, p. 189. From Gudbrandsdal, told by an old peasant of the valley) is a tale of one of those kindly beings among the helpful underground folk, who nevertheless severely punish any disobedience to their command.

XXVIII

THE YOUNG FELLOW AND THE DEVIL

ONCE upon a time there was a young fellow, who was going along cracking nuts. He found a wormy one, and at the selfsame moment he met the devil. "Is it true," said the young fellow, "that the devil can make himself as small as he likes, and can slip through the eye of a needle, as the people say?" "Yes," answered the devil. "Well, I should certainly like to see you crawl into that nut!" said the young fellow. The devil did so. But when he had crawled through the hole, the young fellow stopped it up with a bit of wood. "Now I've got you!" said he, and put the nut in his pocket. After he had gone a while, he came to a smithy, and went in and asked the smith to break the nut for him. "Why, that is a mere trifle!" said the smith, took his smallest hammer, laid the nut on the anvil, and struck it; but the nut would not break. Then he took a somewhat larger hammer; but that was not heavy enough either. Then he took a still larger one, but could do nothing with it at all, and thereupon he grew angry, and took his heaviest hammer. "I'll break you yet!" said he, and struck it with all his might. And then the nut cracked, so that half the smithy roof was carried away, and there was a crash as though the whole hut were falling in. "I believe the devil

was in that nut!" said the smith. "And so he was!" answered the young fellow.

NOTE

This getting the better of the devil, as in "The Young Fellow and the Devil" (Asbjörnsen and Moe, N.F.E., p. 133, No. 30), already occurs in the fairy-tale from the "Thousand and One Nights," where a spirit slips, not into a nut, but into a bottle, in order to show what he can do. Ibsen, too, allows Per Gynt to dwell on this fairy-tale.

XXIX

FARTHER SOUTH THAN SOUTH, AND FARTHER NORTH THAN NORTH, AND IN THE GREAT HILL OF GOLD

ONCE upon a time there was a peasant who had a wheat-field, which was trampled down every Saturday night. Now the peasant had three sons, and he told each one of them to spend a Saturday night in the field, and to watch and see who trampled it down. The oldest was to make the first trial. So he lay down by the upper ridge of the field, and after he had lain there a while he fell asleep. The following morning the whole field had been trampled down, and the young fellow was unable to tell how it had happened.

Now the second son was to make the attempt; but he had the same experience. After he had lain a while he fell asleep, and in the morning he was unable to tell how the field had come to be trampled down.

Now it was the turn of John by the Ashes. He did not lie down by the upper ridge of the field; but lower down, and stayed awake. After he had lain there a while, three doves came flying along. They settled in the field, and that very moment shook off all their feathers, and turned into the most beautiful maidens one might wish to see. They danced with

each other over the whole field; and while they did so, the young fellow gathered up all their feathers. Toward morning they wanted to put on their feathers again, but could not find them anywhere. Then they were frightened, and wept and searched and searched and wept. Finally, they discovered the young fellow, and begged him to give them back their feathers. "But why do you dance in our wheat-field?" said the young fellow. "Alas, it is not our fault," said the maidens. "The troll who has enchanted us sends us here every Saturday night to trample the field. But now give us our feathers, for morning is near." And they begged for them in the sweetest way. "I do not know about that," said the young fellow, "you have trampled down the field so very badly; perhaps—if I might choose and have one of you?" "That would please us," returned the maidens, "but it would not be possible; for three trolls guard us, one with three, one with six and one with nine heads, and they kill all who come to the mountain." But the young fellow said that one of them pleased him so very much that he would make the attempt, in spite of what they had told him. So he chose the middle one, for she seemed the most beautiful to him, and she gave him a ring and put it on his finger. And then the maidens at once put on their garments of dove feathers, and flew back across forest and hill.

When the young fellow returned home, he told what he had seen. "And now I must set out and try my luck," said he. "I do not know whether I will

return, but I must make the venture." "O John, John by the Ashes!" said his brothers, and laughed at him. "Well, it makes no difference, even though I am worthless," said John by the Ashes. "I must try my luck." So the young fellow set out to wander to the place where the maidens lived. They had told him it was farther south than south, and farther north than north, in the great hill of gold. After he had gone a while, he met two poor lads who were quarreling with each other about a pair of old shoes and a bamboo cane, which their mother had left them. The young fellow said it was not worth quarreling about such things, and that he had better shoes and better canes at home. "You cannot say that," returned the brothers, "for whoever has these shoes on can cover a thousand miles in a single step, and whatever is touched with this cane must die at once." The young fellow went on to ask whether they would sell the things. They said that they ought to get a great deal for them. "But what you say of them is not true at all," the young fellow replied. "Yes, indeed, it is absolutely true," they answered. "Just let me see whether the boots will fit me," said the young fellow. So they let him try them on. But no sooner did the young fellow have the boots on his feet, and the cane in his hand, than he took a step and off he was, a thousand miles away.

A little later he met two young fellows who were quarreling over an old fiddle, which had been left them. "Now is that worth while doing?" said the young fellow. "I have a brand-new fiddle at home."

"But I doubt if it has such a tone as ours," said one of the youths, "for if some one is dead, and you play this fiddle, he will come to life again." "That really is a good deal," said the young fellow. "May I draw the bow across the strings?" They told him he might, but no sooner did he have the fiddle in his hand than he took a step, and suddenly he was a thousand miles away.

A little later he met an old man, and him he asked whether he knew where the place might be that was "farther south than south, and farther north than north, and in the great hill of gold." The man said yes, he knew well enough, but it would not do the young fellow much good to get there, for the troll who lived there killed every one. "O, I have to make the attempt, whether it lead to life or death," said the young fellow, for he was fonder than fond of the middle one of the three maidens. So he learned the way from the old man, and finally reached the hill. There he had to pass through three rooms, before he came into the hall to the maidens. And there were locks on every door, and at each stood a watchman. "Where do you want to go?" asked the first watchman. "In to the maidens," said the young fellow. "In you may go, but you'll not get out again," said the watchman, "for now the troll will be along before long." But the young fellow said that, at any rate, he would make the attempt, and went on. So he came to the second watchman. "Where do you want to go?" asked the latter. "In to the maidens," said the young fellow.

"In you may go, but you'll not get out again," said the watchman, "for the troll will be here any minute." "And yet I will make the attempt," said the young fellow, and the watchman let him pass. So he came to the third watchman. "Where do you want to go?" the latter asked him. "In to the maidens," said the young fellow. "In you may go, but you'll never get out again, for the troll will be here in three shakes of a lamb's tail," said the watchman. "And yet I will make the attempt," said the young fellow, and this watchman also let him pass. Then he reached the inner chamber where the maidens sat. They were so beautiful and distinguished, and the room was so full of gold and silver, that the young fellow never could have imagined anything like it. Then he showed the ring, and asked whether the maidens recognized it. Indeed they did recognize him and the ring. "But you poor unfortunate, this is the end of us and of you!" said they. "The troll with three heads will be along before long, and you had better hide behind the door!" "O, I'm so frightened, I'm so frightened!" wailed the maiden whom the young fellow had chosen. "Just you stop crying," said the young fellow. "I think fortune will favor us!"

The troll came that very moment and thrust his three heads into the door. "Uff, it smells like Christian blood here!" said he. The young fellow struck at the heads with his bamboo cane, and the troll was dead in a minute. So they carried out the body and hid it. A little later the troll with six heads

came home. "Uff, it smells like Christian blood here!" said he. "Some one must have crept into the place! But what has become of the other troll?" said he, when he did not see the troll with three heads. "He has not yet come home," said the maidens. "He must have come home," said the troll. "Perhaps he has gone to look for the fellow who crept in here." At that moment the young fellow struck all six of his heads with his bamboo cane, and the troll at once fell dead to the ground. Then they dragged out the corpse.

A while later came the troll with nine heads. "Uff, it smells like Christian blood here!" said he, and grew very angry. "But where are the two others?" said he. "They have not yet come home," said the maidens. "Indeed they have come," said the troll, "but they are probably looking for the Christian who has crept in here!" At that moment, the young fellow sprang from behind the door, and struck one head after another with his bamboo cane. But he had no more than reached the eighth than it seemed to him that the troll was getting the upper hand, and he ran out of the door. The troll was so furious that he came near bursting. He seized all the maidens and killed them, and then out he flew after the young fellow. The latter had hidden behind a big rock, and when the troll came darting up, showering sparks in his rage, he struck at his ninth head, too, and the troll fell on his back, dead. Then the young fellow ran in again, took his fiddle and played, and all the maidens came back to life.

Now they wanted to go home; but did not know how to find the long road back. "I know what we must do," said the young fellow, "I will take you on my back, one by one, and then the journey will not be long for us." And this he did. He carried home all the gold and silver he found in the hill, and then celebrated his wedding with the middle one of the maidens, and if they have not died, they are living this very day.

NOTE

"Farther South Than South, and Farther North Than North, and in the Great Hill of Gold" (Janson, No. 12, p. 39) begins with the story of three maidens in feather dress who have to keep their human form if robbed of their feathers. The legend of Wieland and Smith introduces three similar maidens in swan's plumage, one of whom he wins for himself; yet when she finds her swan dress again after long years, yearning overpowers her, and she flies away. Our fairy-tale is kindlier, and allows the young fellow to gain his dove princess after strenuous adventures.

XXX

LUCKY ANDREW

THERE was once a rich peasant who had two sons, named John Nicholas and Lucky Andrew. The oldest was one of those fellows of whom one never can quite make head or tail. He was a most unpleasant customer to deal with, and he was more grasping and greedy than the folk of the Northland are, as a rule, though it is only too rare to find them unblessed with these attractive qualities. The other, Lucky Andrew, was wild and high spirited, but always good natured, and no matter how badly off he might be, he would always insist that he had been born under a lucky star. When the eagle, in order to defend his nest, belabored his head and face till the blood ran, he would still maintain that he was born under a lucky star, if only he managed to bring home a single eaglet. Did his boat capsize, which occasionally happened, and did they discover him hanging to it, quite overcome with the water, cold and exertion, and asked him how he felt, he would reply: "O, quite well. I have been saved. I surely am in luck!"

When their father died, both of them were of age, and not long after they both had to go out to the sand-banks to fetch some fishing-nets, which had

been left there since the summer fishing. It was late in the fall, after the time when most fishermen are busy with the summer fishing. Andrew had his gun along, which he carried with him wherever he went. John Nicholas did not say much while they were underway; but he thought all the harder. They were not ready to set out for home again until near evening.

"Hark, Lucky Andrew, do you know there will be a storm to-night?" said John Nicholas, and looked out across the sea. "I think it would be best if we stayed here until morning!"

"There'll be no storm," said Andrew. "The Seven Sisters have not put on their fog-caps, so you may be quite at rest."

But his brother complained of being weary, and at length they decided to remain there for the night. When Andrew awoke he found himself alone; and he saw neither brother nor boat, until he came to the highest point of the island. Then he discovered him far out, darting for land like a sea-gull. Andrew did not understand the whole affair. There were still provisions there, as well as a dish of curd, his gun and various other things. So Andrew wasted but little time in thought. "He will come back this evening," said he. "Only a fool loses heart so long as he can eat." But in the evening there was no brother to be seen, and Andrew waited day by day, and week by week; until at last, he realized that his brother had marooned him on this barren island in order to be able to keep their in-

heritance for himself, and not have to divide it. And such was the case, for when John Nicholas came in sight of land on his homeward trip, he had capsized the boat, and declared that Lucky Andrew had been drowned.

But the latter did not lose heart. He gathered drift-wood along the strand, shot sea-birds, and looked for mussels and roots. He built himself a raft of drift-timber, and fished with a pole that had also been left behind. One day, while he was at work, he happened to notice a depression or hollow in the sand, as though made by the keel of a large Northland schooner, and he could plainly trace the braidings of the hawsers from the strand up to the top of the island. Then he thought to himself that he was in no danger, for he saw there was truth in the report he had often heard, that the meer-folk made the island their abode, and did much business with their ships.

"God be praised for good company! That was just what I needed. Yes, it is true, as I have always said, that I was born under a lucky star," thought Andrew to himself; perhaps he said so too, for occasionally he really had to talk a little. So he lived through the fall. Once he saw a boat, and hung a rag on a pole and waved with it; but that very moment the sail dropped, and the crew took to the oars and rowed away at top speed, for they thought the meer-trolls were making signs and waving.

On Christmas Eve Andrew heard fiddles and music far out at sea; and when he came out, he saw

a glow of light that came from a great Northland schooner, which was gliding toward the land—yet such a ship he had never yet seen. It has a mainsail of uncommon size, which looked to him to be of silk, and the most delicate tackling, as thin as though woven of steel wire, and everything else was in proportion, as fine and handsome as any Northlander might wish to have. The whole schooner was filled with little people dressed in blue, but the girl who stood at the helm was adorned like a bride, and looked as splendid as a queen, for she wore a crown and costly garments. Yet any one could see that she was a human being, for she was tall, and handsomer than the meer-folk. In fact, Lucky Andrew thought that she was handsomer than any girl he ever had seen. The schooner headed for the land where Andrew stood; but with his usual presence of mind, he hurried to the fisherman's hut, pulled down his gun from the wall, and crept up into the large loft and hid himself, so that he could see all that passed in the hut. He soon noticed that the whole room was alive with people. They filled it completely and more, and still more of them came in. Then the walls began to crack, and the little hut spread out at all corners, and grew so splendid and magnificent that the wealthiest merchant could not have had its equal; it was almost like being in a royal castle. Tables were covered with the most exquisite silver and gold. When they had eaten they began to dance. Under cover of the noise, Andrew crept to the lookout at the side of the roof, and climbed down. Then

he ran to the schooner, threw his flint-stone over it, and in order to make certain, cut a cross into it with his sharp-cutting knife. When he came back again, the dance was in full swing. The tables were dancing and the benches and chairs—everything else in the room was dancing, too. The only one who did not dance was the bride; she only sat there and looked on, and when the bridegroom came to fetch her, she sent him away. For the moment there was no thought of stopping. The fiddler knew neither rest nor repose, and did not pass his cap, but played merrily on with his left hand, and beat time with his foot, until he was dripping with sweat, and the fiddle was hidden by the dust and smoke. When Andrew noticed that his own feet began to twitch where he was standing, he thought to himself: "Now I had better shoot away, or else he will play me right off the ground!" So he turned his gun, thrust it through the window, and shot it off over the bride's head; but upside down, otherwise the bullet would have hit him. The moment the shot crashed, all the troll-folk tumbled out of the door together; but when they saw that the schooner was banned on the shore, they wailed and crept into a hole in the hill. But all the gold and silver dishes were left behind, and the bride, too, was still sitting there. She told Lucky Andrew that she had been carried into the hill when she was only a small child. Once, when her mother had gone to the pen to attend to the milking, she had taken her along; but when she had to go home for a moment, she left the child sitting

under a juniper-bush, and told her that she might eat the berries if she only repeated three times:

"I eat juniper-berries blue,
Wherein Jesu's cross I view.
I eat whortle-berries red,
Since 'twas for my sake He bled!"

But after her mother had gone, she found so many berries that she forgot to say her verse, and so she was enchanted and taken into the hill. And there no harm had been done her, save that she had lost the top joint of the little finger of her left hand, and the goblins had been kind to her; yet it had always seemed to her as though something were not as it should be, she felt as though something weighed upon her, and she had suffered greatly from the advances of the dwarf who had been chosen for her husband. When Andrew learned who her mother and her people were, he saw that they were related to him, and they became very good friends. So Andrew could truly say he had been born under a lucky star. Then they sailed home, and took along the schooner, and all the gold and silver, and all the treasure which had been left in the hut, and then Andrew was far wealthier than his brother.

But the latter, who suspected where all this wealth had come from, did not wish to be any poorer than Andrew. He knew that trolls and goblins walk mainly on Christmas Eve, and for that reason he sailed out to the sand banks at that time. And on

Christmas Eve he did see a light or fire, but it seemed to be like will-o'-the-wisps fluttering about. When he came nearer he heard splashes, horrible howls, and cold, piercing cries, and there was a smell of slime and sea-weed, as at ebb-tide. Terrified, he ran up into the hut, from whence he could see the trolls on the shore. They were short and thick like hay-ricks, completely covered with fur, with kirtles of skins, fishing boots, and enormous fist-gloves. In place of head and hair they had bundles of sea-weed. When they crawled up from the strand there was a gleam behind them like that of rotting wood, and when they shook themselves they showered sparks about them. When they drew nearer, John Nicholas crawled up into the loft as his brother had done. The goblins dragged a great stone into the hut, and began to beat their gloves dry against it, and meanwhile they screamed so that John Nicholas's blood turned to ice in his hiding-place. Then one of them sneezed into the ashes on the hearth in order to make the fire burn again; while the others carried in heather-grass and drift-wood, as coarse and heavy as lead. The smoke and the heat nearly killed the eavesdropper in the loft, and in order to catch his breath and get some fresh air, he tried to crawl out of the look-out in the roof; yet he was of much heavier build than his brother, stuck fast and could move neither in nor out. Then he grew frightened and began to scream; but the goblins screamed much louder, and roared and howled, and thumped and clamored inside and outside the hut. But when the

cock crowed they disappeared, and John Nicholas freed himself, too. Yet when he returned home from his trip, he had lost his reason, and after that the same cold, sinister screams which are the mark of the troll in the Northland, might often be heard sounding from store-rooms and lofts where he happened to be. Before his death, however, his reason returned, and he was buried in consecrated ground, as they say. But after that time no human foot ever trod the sand-banks again. They sank, and the meer-folk, it is believed, went to the Lekang Islands. Andrew's luck held good; no ship made more successful trips than his own; but whenever he came to the Lekang Islands he lay becalmed—the goblins went aboard or ashore with their goods—but after a time he had fair winds, whether he happened to want to go to Bergen, or sail home. He had many children, and all of them were bright and vigorous, yet every one of them lacked the upper joint of the little finger of his left hand.

NOTE

"Lucky Andrew" (Asbjörnsen, *Huldreeventyr*, I, p. 286. From Heligoland) is one of a type which is a favorite character in the fairy-tale, care-free, brave and always happy, though he dwells in awful loneliness in the midst of the sea, and comes across the most sinister goblins.

XXXI

THE PASTOR AND THE SEXTON

ONCE upon a time there was a pastor who was such a boor that when any one was driving toward him along the highway, he would shout to them, while still some distance off: "Get out of the way! Get out of the pastor's way!" One day, while he was doing this, along came the king. "Get out of the way! Get out of the way!" shouted the pastor. But the king drove as he had a mind to, and he drove so fast that this time it was the pastor who had to get out of the way, and when the king passed him, he called out: "See that you come to me at the castle to-morrow, and if you cannot answer three questions I put to you, then you will have to take off your pastor's gown as a punishment for your arrogance!"

This sounded different from what the pastor was used to hearing. Shout and bluster, and completely forget himself in his arrogance, that he knew how to do; but returning a plain answer to a plain question was not his strong point. So he went to the sexton, who was supposed to have more in his upper story than the pastor. He told him he did not venture to go to the castle, because "a fool can ask more than ten wise men can answer," said he, and he induced the sexton to go in his stead.

The sexton set forth, and came to the castle dressed in the pastor's gown and ruff. The king received him out in the entrance with crown and scepter, and was so splendidly dressed that he fairly gleamed and shone.

"Well, are you here?" Yes, indeed, there he was. "First tell me," said the king, "the distance from East to West." "It is one day's journey," said the sexton.

"And how is that?" asked the king. "Well, the sun rises in the East and goes down in the West, and manages to do so nicely in the course of a single day," said the sexton.

"Good," said the king, "but now tell me how much I am worth, just as I stand."

"Well, if our Lord Christ himself was valued at thirty pieces of silver, then I can hardly value you at more than twenty-nine," said the sexton.

"Well and good," said the king, "but since you are so wondrous wise, tell me what I am thinking now."

"Ah, my lord king, you are probably thinking that this is the pastor who is standing before you, but there you are greatly mistaken, for I am the sexton."

"Then drive straight home, and be the pastor, and the pastor shall be the sexton," said the king, and that is what happened, too.

NOTE

The droll tale of "The Pastor and the Sexton" is widely known and emphasizes in humorous guise the value of politeness and consideration, as well as a ready wit. (Asbjörnsen, N.F.E., p. 126, No. 86. From Valsers.)

XXXII

THE SKIPPER AND SIR URIAN

ONCE upon a time there was a master mariner who had the most unheard of good fortune in all that he undertook; none had such splendid cargoes, and none earned so much money as he did, for everything seemed to come to him. And it is quite certain that there were none who could risk taking the trips he did, for wherever he sailed he had fair winds, yes, it was even said that when he turned around his cap, the wind turned with it, to suit his wish.

Thus he sailed for many years with cargoes of lumber, and even went as far as China, and earned money like hay. But once he sailed the North Sea with all sails set, as though he had stolen ship and cargo. But the one who was after him sailed even more swiftly. And that was Sir Urian, the devil! With him the master mariner, as you may imagine, had made a bargain, and that very day and hour the contract expired, and the mariner had to be prepared, from moment to moment, to see him arrive to fetch him.

So he came up on deck, out of the cabin, and took a look at the weather. Then he called the ship's carpenter and several others, and told them to go down at once into the ship's hold, and bore two holes in

the ship's bottom. Then they were to take the pumps from out their frames, and set them closely over the holes, so that the water would rise quite high in the pipes.

The men were surprised, and thought his orders passing strange, yet they did as he told them. They bored the holes, and set up the pumps closely over them, so that not even a drop of water could get at the cargo; yet the North Sea stood seven feet high in the pumps.

No more had they cast overboard their chips and litter than Sir Urian came along in a squall, and grabbed the master mariner by the collar. "Wait, old boy, the matter is not so terribly urgent!" said he, and began to defend himself, and pry loose the claws that held him with an awl. "Did you not bind yourself in your contract always to keep my ship tight and dry?" said the master mariner. "You are a nice article! Just take a look at the pumps! The water stands seven feet high in the pipes! Pump, devil, pump my ship dry, then you may take me to have and to hold as long as ever you wish!"

The devil was fool enough, and allowed himself to be hoaxed. He worked and sweat, and the perspiration ran down his cheeks in such streams that one might have run a mill with them, but he merely kept on pumping out of the North Sea into the North Sea. At last he had enough of it, and when he could pump no longer, he flew home to his grandmother to rest. He let the master mariner stay master mariner as

long as he might choose, and if he has not died he is still sailing the seas at his own sweet will, and letting the wind blow according to how he turns his cap.

NOTE

In the story of "The Skipper and Sir Urian" (Asbjörnsen, N.F.E., p. 33, No. 69. From the vicinity of Drontheim) we once more have the devil, "Old Eric," as the Norwegians call him, playing the part of the dupe, this time as the victim of a cunning old sea-dog.

XXXIII

THE YOUTH WHO WAS TO SERVE THREE YEARS WITHOUT PAY

ONCE upon a time there was a poor man, who had only one son; but one who was so lazy and clumsy that he did not want to do a stroke of work. "If I am not to feed this bean-pole for the rest of my life, I'll have to send him far away, where not a soul knows him," thought the father. "Once he is knocking about in the world, he will not be so likely to come home again." So he took his son and led him about in the world, far and wide, and tried to get him taken on as a serving man; but no one would have him. Finally, after wandering a long time, they came to a rich man, of whom it was said that he turned every shilling around seven times before he could make up his mind to part with it. He was willing to take the youth for a servant, and he was to work three years without pay. But at the end of the three years, his master was to go into town, two days in succession, and buy the first thing he saw, and on the third morning the youth himself was to go to town and also buy the first thing he met. And all this he was to receive in lieu of his wage.

So the youth served out his three years, and did better than they had expected him to do. He was

by no means a model serving-man; but then his master was none of the best, either, for he let him go all that time in the same clothes he had worn when he entered his service, until, finally, one patch elbowed the other.

Now when his master was to go to do his buying, he set out as early as possible in the morning. "Costly wares are only to be seen by day," said he, "they are not drifting about the street so early. It will probably cost me enough as it is, for what I find is a matter of purest chance." The first thing he saw on the street was an old woman, who was carrying a covered basket. "Good-day, granny," said the man. "And good-day to you, daddy," said the old woman.

"What have you in your basket?" asked the man. "Would you like to know?" said the woman. "Yes," said the man, "for I have to buy the first thing that comes my way." "Well, if you want to know, buy it!" said the old woman. "What does it cost?" asked the man. She must have four shillings for it, declared the woman. This did not seem such a tremendous price to him, he would let it go at that, said he, and raised the cover. And there lay a pup in the basket. When the man got home from his journey to town, there stood the youth full of impatience and curiosity, wondering what his wage for the first year might be. "Are you back already, master?" asked the youth. "Yes, indeed," said his master. "And what have you bought?" asked the youth. "What I have bought is nothing so very

rare," said the man. "I don't even know whether I ought to show it to you; but I bought the first thing to be had, and that was a pup," said he. "And I thank you most kindly for it," said the youth. "I have always been fond of dogs."

The following morning it was no better. The man set out as early as possible, and had not as yet reached town before he met the old woman with the basket. "Good-day, granny," said the man. "And good-day to you, daddy," said the old woman. "What have you in your basket to-day?" asked the man. "If you want to know, then buy it!" was again the answer. "What does it cost?" asked the man. She wanted four shillings for it, she had only the one price. The man said he would buy it, for he thought that this time he would make a better purchase. He raised the cover, and this time a kitten lay in the basket. When he reached home, there stood the youth, waiting to see what he was to get in lieu of his second year's wages. "Are you back again, master?" said he. "Yes, indeed," said the master. "What did you buy to-day?" asked the youth. "Alas, nothing better than I did yesterday," said the man, "but I did as we agreed, and bought the first thing I came across, and that was this kitten." "You could not have hit on anything better," said the youth, "for all my life long I have been fond of cats as well as of dogs." "I do not fare so badly this way," thought the man, "but when he sets out for himself, then the matter will probably turn out differently."

So the third morning the youth set out for himself, and when he entered town, he came across the same old woman with her basket on her arm. "Good morning, granny," said he. "And good morning to you, my boy," said the old woman. "What have you in your basket?" asked the youth. "If you want to know, then buy it!" answered the old woman. "Do you want to sell it?" asked the youth. Yes, indeed, and it would cost four shillings, said the old woman. That is a bargain, thought the youth, and wanted to take it, for he had to buy the first thing that came his way. "Well, you can take the whole blessed lot," said the old woman, "the basket and all that's in it. But do not look into it before you get home, do you hear!" No, indeed, he would be sure not to look in the basket, said he. But on the way, he kept wondering as to what might be in the basket, and willy-nilly—he could not keep from raising the cover a little, and looking through the crack. But that very minute a little lizard popped out of the crack, and ran across the road so quickly that it fairly hummed—and aside from the lizard there was nothing in the basket. "Stop, wait a minute, and don't run away! I just bought you," said the youth. "Stab me in the neck! Stab me in the neck!" cried the lizard. The youth did not have to be told twice. He ran after the lizard and stabbed it in the neck just as it was slipping into a hole in a wall. And that very moment it turned into a man, as handsome and splendid as the handsomest prince, and a prince he was, if truth be told.

"Now you have delivered me," said he, "for the old woman, with whom you and your master have been dealing, is a witch, and she turned me into a lizard, and my brother and sister into a dog and cat." The youth thought this a remarkable tale. "Yes, indeed," said the prince. "She was actually on the way to throw us into the sea and drown us; but if any one were to appear and want to buy us, she had to sell us for four shillings apiece, that had been agreed upon. And now you shall go home with me to my father, and be rewarded for your good deed." "Your home must be a good way off," said the youth. "O, it is not so far," declared the prince, "there it is!" And he pointed to a high hill in the distance.

They marched along as fast as they could, but still it was farther away than it seemed. So it was late at night before they reached their goal. The prince knocked. "Who is knocking at my door, and disturbing my sleep?" came a voice within the hill. And the voice was so powerful that the earth trembled. "Open, father, your son has come home!" cried the prince. Then the father was glad to open the door quickly. "I thought you were already lying at the bottom of the sea," said the old man. "But you are not alone?" "This is the chap who delivered me," said the prince, "and I asked him to come with me so that you could reward him." That he would attend to, said the old man. "Now you must come right in," said he, "for here you may rest in safety." They went in and sat down, and

the old man laid an armful of wood and a couple of big logs on the fire, until every corner was as bright as day, and wherever they looked everything was indescribably splendid. The youth had never seen anything like it, and such fine things to eat and drink as the old man served up to him, he had never yet tasted. And the bowls and dishes, and goblets and plates, were all of pure silver and shining gold.

There was no need to urge the young folk. They ate and drank and enjoyed themselves, and then slept far into the next day. The youth was still asleep when the old man came and offered him a morning draft in a golden goblet. And when he had put on his rags and breakfasted, he was allowed to pick out what he wanted, as a reward for delivering the prince. There was much to see and still more to take, as you may believe. "Well, what do you want?" asked the king. "You may take what you will; for as you see there is enough from which to choose." The youth said he would have to think it over a bit, and speak to the prince. And that he was allowed to do. "Well, I suppose you have seen all sorts of beautiful things?" asked the prince. "That is a fact," said the youth. "But tell me, what ought I to choose among all these magnificent things? Your father said I might pick out whatever I wished." "You must choose none among all the things you have seen," answered the prince, "but my father wears a ring on his little finger, and you must ask him for that." This the youth did, and begged the king for the ring on his finger. "It is

dearer to me than anything else I have," said the king, "but my son is just as dear to me, and therefore I will give you the ring. Do you know what powers it has?" No, that the youth did not know. "While you wear it on your finger, you can get everything that you want to have," said the king. The youth thanked him most kindly, and the king and the prince wished him all manner of luck on his journey, and charged him to take the best care of the ring.

He had not been long underway before it occurred to him to test what the ring could do. So he wished to be dressed in new clothes from head to toe, and no more had he uttered the wish than there he was in them. And he looked as handsome and bright as a new nickel. Then he thought to himself it would be pleasant to play a trick on his father. "He was none too friendly to me while I was still at home." And so the youth wished he were standing before his father's door, just as ragged as he had been before. And that very minute there he stood.

"Good-day, father, and many thanks for the last time!" said the youth. But when his father saw he had come home far more tattered and torn than when he had gone away, he grew angry and began to scold: "There is nothing to be made of you, if during all the long years of your service you have not even been able to earn a suit of clothes to your back."

"Now do not be so angry, father," said the youth. "You need not take for granted that a fellow is a

vagabond because he goes about in rags. Now I want you to go to the king as my proxy, and ask his daughter's hand for me." "Come, come, why, that is utter folly and nonsense!" cried his father. But the youth insisted that it was gospel truth, and took a birch bough, and drove his father to the king's castle-gate. And the latter came stumbling right in to the king, and wept so that the tears just tumbled out.

"Well, what has happened to you, my dear fellow?" asked the king. "If a wrong has been done you, I will see that you get your rights." No, no wrong had been done him, said the man, but he had a son who gave him a great deal of trouble: it was impossible to make a man of him, and now he had evidently lost what few senses he did possess. "Because he has just chased me to the castle-gate with a birch bough, and threatened me, if I do not get him the king's daughter for a bride," said the man. "Set your mind at rest, my good fellow," said the king, "and send your son to me. Then we will see whether we can come to an understanding."

The youth came rushing in to the king, so that his rags fairly fluttered. "Do I get your daughter?" he cried. "Well, that is just what we are going to discuss," said the king, "perhaps she would not answer for you, and perhaps you would not answer for her," said he. That might be the case, said the youth.

Now a great ship from abroad had shortly before come into port, and one could see it from the castle window. "Now we'll see," said the king. "If you

can build a ship that is the exact counterpart of the one outside, and just as handsome, in the space of an hour or two, then, perhaps, you may get my daughter," said the king.

"If it be no more than that . . . " said the youth. Then he went down to the shore and sat on a sand-pile, and when he had sat there long enough, he wished that a ship might lie out in the fjord, completely equipped with masts and sails and all that goes with them, and that it might resemble the ship already lying there in every particular. And that very minute there lay the ship, and when the king saw that there were two ships at anchor instead of one, he came down to the shore himself to look more closely into the matter. And then he saw the youth. He was standing in a boat, with a broom in one hand, as though he meant to give the ship a final cleaning; but when he saw the king coming, he threw away the broom and cried: "Now the ship is finished. Do I get your daughter now?"

"That is all very fine," said the king, "but you must stand yet another test. If you can build a castle that is just like mine in every particular within an hour or so, then we will go further into the matter."

"No more than that?" cried the youth. After he had strolled around for a long while, and the time set was nearly over, he wished that a castle might stand there that resembled the king's castle in every particular. And before long there it stood, as you may believe. And it did not take long, either, be-

fore the king, together with the queen and the princess, came to look at the new castle. The youth stood there with his broom again, and swept and cleaned. "Now the castle is in apple-pie order. Do I get her now?" he cried.

"That's all very fine," declared the king, "just come in and we'll talk it over," said he, for he had noticed that the youth knew a thing or two, and he was thinking over how he might get rid of him. The king went on ahead, and after him the queen, and then went the princess, just in advance of the youth. Then he at once wished to be the handsomest man in the world, and so he was, that very minute. When the princess saw what a splendid figure he suddenly cut, she nudged the queen, who in turn nudged the king, and after they had stared at him long enough, they at last realized that the youth was more than he had at first appeared to be, in his rags. So they decided that the princess was to treat him nicely, in order to find out how matters really stood, and the princess was as sweet and amiable as sugar-bread, and flattered the youth, and said that she could not do without him, night or day. And when it came toward the end of the first evening, she said: "Since you and I are to be married in any case, I am sure you will have no secrets from me, and you will not want to hide from me how you managed to do all these fine things."

"O, yes," said the youth. "You shall know about it, but first of all let us be married; before that nothing counts!"

The following evening the princess pretended to be quite unhappy. She was well aware, said she, that he did not attach much importance to her love, when he would not even tell her what she wanted so much to know. If he could not even oblige her in such a small matter, his love could not amount to a great deal. Then the youth fell into despair, and to make up with her again, he told her everything. She lost no time, and let the king and queen know all about it. Thereupon they agreed as to how they would go about getting the youth's ring away from him, and then, thought they, it would not really be hard to get rid of him.

In the evening the princess came with a sleeping potion, and said she wanted to give her lover a drink that would increase his love for her, since it was plain he did not love her enough. The youth suspected nothing, and drank, and at once fell so fast asleep that they could have pulled down the house over his head. Then the princess drew the ring from his finger, put it on herself, and wished the youth might be lying on the garbage-pile in the street, just as tattered and torn as he had come to them, and in his place she wanted the handsomest prince in the world. And that very minute everything happened just as she wished. After a time the youth woke up, out on the garbage-pile, and at first thought he was dreaming: but when he saw the ring was gone, he understood how it all had happened, and fell into such despair that he got up and wanted to jump right into the sea.

But then he met the cat his master had bought for him. "Where are you going?" she asked. "To throw myself into the sea and drown," was the youth's reply.

"Do not do so on any account," said the cat. "You will get your ring again."

"Yes, if that were so, then . . ." said the youth.

The cat ran away. Suddenly a rat crossed her path. "Now I will pounce on you!" said the cat. "O do not do that," said the rat, "you shall have the ring again!"

"Well, if that is so, then . . . " said the cat.

When the folk at the castle had gone to bed, the rat crept around, and sniffed and spied out the room of the prince and princess; and at last he found a little hole through which he crawled. Then he heard the prince and princess talking to each other, and saw that the prince was wearing the ring on his finger. Before she went, the princess said: "Good night. And see that you take good care of the ring, my dearest!"

"Pooh! no one will come in through the walls for the sake of a ring," said the prince, "but if you think it is not safe enough on my hand, why, I can put it in my mouth."

After a time he lay down on his back, and prepared to go to sleep. But just then the ring slipped down his throat, and he had to cough, so that the ring flew out and rolled along the ground. Swish! —the rat had caught it, and crept out with it to the

cat, who was waiting at the rat-hole. But in the meantime the king had caught the youth, and had had him put in a great tower and condemned to death, because he had made a mock of his daughter —so the king said. And the youth was to sit in the tower until he was beheaded. But the cat kept prowling around the tower all the time, trying to sneak in with the ring. And then an eagle came along, caught her up in his claws and flew across the sea with her. And suddenly a hawk appeared, and flung himself on the eagle, and the eagle let the cat fall into the sea. When she felt the water, she grew afraid, let the ring fall, and swam to land. No sooner had she shaken the water from her fur than she met the dog whom the youth's master had bought for him.

"Well, what am I to do now?" said the cat, and wept and lamented. "The ring is gone, and they want to murder the youth." "That I do not know," said the dog, "but what I do know is that I have the very worst kind of an ache in my stomach," said he.

"There you have it. You have surely over-eaten," said the cat.

"I never eat more than I need," said the dog, "and just now I have eaten nothing at all, save a dead fish that was left here by the ebb-tide."

"Could the fish have swallowed the ring?" asked the cat. "And must you, also, lose your life, because you cannot digest gold?"

"That may well be the case," said the dog. "But

then it would be best if I died at once, for then the youth might still be saved."

"O, that is not necessary!" said the rat—who was there, too—"I do not need a very large opening through which to crawl, and if the ring is really there, I am sure I can find it." So the rat slipped down into the dog, and before very long he came out again with the ring. And then the cat made her way to the tower, and clawed her way up till she found a hole through which she could thrust her paw, and thus brought back the ring to the youth.

No sooner was it on his finger than he wished that the tower might break down, and that very moment he was standing just before the tower-gate, and reviling the king and the queen and the king's daughter as though they were the lowest of the low. The king hastily called together his army, and told it to surround the tower, and take the youth prisoner, dead or alive. But the youth only wished the whole army might be sticking up to their necks in the big swamp in the hills, and there they had trouble enough getting out—those among them who did not stick fast. Then he went right on reviling where he had stopped, and finally, when he had told them all just what he thought of them, he wished that the king, the queen and the king's daughter might sit for the rest of their lives in the tower into which they had thrust him. And when they were sitting there, he took possession of the king's land and country on his own account. Then the dog changed into a prince, and the cat into a prin-

cess, and he made the latter his wife, and they were married and celebrated their wedding long and profusely.

NOTE

In "The Youth Who Was to Serve Three Years Without Pay" (Asbjörnsen, N.F.E., No. 63, p. 8. From Gudbrandsdal) we have the tale of a magic ring, whose possessor is robbed of it by a faithless woman, and which is brought back to him by faithful animals, after various vicissitudes.

XXXIV

THE YOUTH WHO WANTED TO WIN THE DAUGHTER OF THE MOTHER IN THE CORNER

ONCE upon a time there was a woman who had a son, and he was so lazy and slow that there was not a single blessed useful thing he would do. But he liked to sing and to dance, and that is what he did all day long, and far into the night as well. The longer this went on, the worse off his mother was. The youth was growing, and he wanted so much to eat that it was barely possible to find it, and more and more went for his clothes the older he grew, since his clothes did not last long, as you may imagine, because the youth skipped and dance about without stopping, through forest and field.

At length it was too much for his mother, so one day she told the young fellow that he ought at last to get to work, and really do something, or both of them would have to starve to death. But the youth had no mind to do so, he said, and would rather try to win the daughter of the mother in the corner, for if he got her, then he would live happily ever after, and could sing and dance, and would not have to plague himself with work.

When the mother heard that she thought it might not be such a bad idea after all, and she dressed up

the youth as well as she could, so that he would make a good showing when he came to the mother in the corner, and then he set forth.

When he stepped out the sun was shining bright and warm; but it had rained during the night, and the ground was soft and full of water puddles. The youth took the shortest path to the mother in the corner, and sang and danced, as he always did. But suddenly, as he was hopping and skipping along, he came to a swamp, and there were only some logs laid down to cross it; and from the one log he had to jump over a puddle to a clump of grass, unless he wanted to dirty his shoes. And then he went ker-flop! The very moment he set foot on the clump of grass, he went down and down until he was standing in a dark, ugly hole. At first he could see nothing at all, but when he had been there a little while, he saw that there was a rat, who was wiggling and waggling around, and had a bunch of keys hanging from her tail.

"Have you come, my boy?" said the rat. "I must thank you for coming to visit me: I have been expecting you for a long time. I am sure you have come to win me, and I can well imagine that you are in a great hurry. But you must have a little patience. I am to receive a large dower, and am not yet ready for the wedding; but I will do my best to see that we are married soon."

When she had said this, she produced a couple of egg-shells, with all sorts of eatables such as rats eat, and set them down before the youth, and said: "Now

you must sit down and help yourself, for I am sure you are tired and hungry."

The youth had no great appetite for this food. "If I were only away and up above again," thought he, but he said nothing.

"Now I think you must surely want to get home again," said the rat. "I am well aware that you are waiting impatiently for the wedding, and I will hurry all I can. Take this linen thread along, and when you get up above, you must not turn around, but must go straight home, and as you go you must keep repeating: 'Short before and long behind!' " and with that she laid a linen thread in his hand.

"Heaven be praised!" said the youth when he was up above once more. "I'll not go down there again in a hurry." But he held the thread in his hand, and danced and sang as usual. And although he no longer had the rat-hole in mind, he began to hum:

"Short before and long behind!
Short before and long behind!"

When he stood before the door at home, he turned around; and there lay many, many hundred yards of the finest linen, finer than the most skillful weaver could have spun.

"Mother, come out, come out!" called and cried the youth. His mother came darting out, and asked what was the matter. And when she saw the linen, stretching as far as she could see, and then a bit,

she could not believe her eyes, until the youth told her how it all happened. But when she had heard that, and had tested the linen between her fingers, she was so pleased that she, too, began to sing and dance.

Then she took the linen, cut it, and sewed shirts from it for her son and herself, and the remainder she took to town and sold for a good price. Then for a time they lived in all joy and comfort. But when that was over the woman had not a bite to eat in the house, and so she told her son that it was the highest time for him to take service, and really do something, or else both of them would have to starve to death.

But the youth preferred to go to the mother in the corner, and try to win her daughter. His mother did not think this such a bad idea, for now the youth was handsomely dressed, and made a good showing.

So she brushed him, and furbished him up as well as she could, and he himself took a pair of new shoes, and polished them till they shone like a mirror, and when he had done so, off he went. Everything happened as before. When he stepped out, the sun was shining bright and warm; but it had rained during the night, and the road was soft and muddy, and every puddle was full of water. The youth took the shortest way to the mother in the corner, and sang and danced and danced and sang, as he always did. He followed another road, not the one he had taken before; but as he was hopping and skipping along, he suddenly came to the log across the swamp, and

from the log he had to jump over a puddle to a clump of grass, unless he wanted to dirty his shoes. And then he went kerflop. And he sank down and could not stop, until he reached a horrible, dark, ugly hole. At first he could see nothing; but after he had stood there a while, he discovered a rat with a bunch of keys at the end of her tail, which she was wiggling and waggling in front of him.

"Have you come, my boy?" said the rat. "You are welcome among us! It was kind of you to come and visit me again so soon; no doubt you are very impatient, I can well imagine it. But you must really be patient a little while longer; for my trousseau is not quite complete, but by the time you come again all shall be ready." When she had said this she offered him egg-shells containing all sorts of food such as rats like. But it looked to the youth like food that had been eaten, and he said that he had no appetite. "If I were only safely away, and up above again," thought he, but he said nothing. After a time the rat said: "Now I think you must surely want to get up above again. I will hurry on the wedding as quickly as I can. And now take this woolen thread along, and when you get up above, you must not turn around, but go straight home, and underway you must keep on repeating: 'Short before and long behind!' " and with that she laid the woolen thread in his hand.

"Thank heaven, I have escaped!" said the youth to himself. "I am sure I'll never go there again," and then he sang and danced again as usual. He

thought no more of the rat-hole, but fell to humming, and sang without stopping:

"Short before and long behind!
Short before and long behind!"

When he stood at the door of the house, he happened to look around; and there lay the finest woolen goods, many hundred yards of it, stretching for half a mile, and so fine that no city counselor wore a coat of finer cloth.

"Mother, mother, come out, come out!" cried the youth. His mother came to the door, clasped her hands together over her head, and nearly fainted with joy when she saw all the fine goods. And then the youth had to tell her how it had come to him, and all that had taken place, from beginning to end. This brought them a small fortune, as you may imagine. The youth had new clothes, and his mother went to town and sold the goods, yard by yard, and was handsomely paid for them. And then she decorated her room, and she herself, in her old days, went about in such style that she might have been taken for some lady of distinction. So they lived splendidly and happily, but finally this money, too, came to an end; and one day the woman had not a bite to eat left in the house, and told her son that now he had better look for work, and really do something, or both of them would starve to death.

But the youth thought it would be much better to go to the mother in the corner and try to win

her daughter. This time his mother again agreed with him, and did not contradict the youth; for now he had fine new clothes, and looked so distinguished that it seemed out of the question to her that such a good-looking fellow would be refused. So she furbished him up and tricked him out in the handsomest way, and he himself took out his new shoes and polished them so brightly that you could see yourself in them, and when he had done so he set forth.

This time he did not choose the shortest road; but took a roundabout way, the longest he could find, for he did not want to go down to the rat again because he was sick of her eternal wiggling and waggling, and the talk about marriage. The weather and the road were exactly the same as when he had gone before. The sun shone, the swamp and the puddles gleamed, and the youth sang and danced as usual. And in the midst of his skipping and jumping, before he knew it, there he stood at the same crossing which led across the swamp. There he had to jump over a puddle to a clump of grass, unless he wanted to dirty his brightly polished shoes. "Kerflop!" and down he went, and did not stop until he stood once more in the same dark, ugly, dirty hole. At first he was pleased because he could see nothing. But after he had stood there a while, he once more discovered the ugly rat who was so repulsive to him, with the bunch of keys hanging from her tail.

"Good-day, my boy," said the rat. "You are welcome! I see that you can no longer live without me, and I thank you. And now everything is in

readiness for our wedding, and we will go straight to church." Nothing will come of that, thought the youth, but he did not say a word. Then the rat whistled, and at once every corner was alive with swarms of mice and small rats, and six large rats came dragging along a frying-pan. Two mice sat up behind as grooms, and two sprang up in front to drive the coach. Several seated themselves within, and the rat with the bunch of keys took her place in their midst. To the youth she said: "The road is a little narrow here, so you will have to walk beside the coach, sweetheart, until the road is broader. And then you may sit beside me in the coach."

"How fine that will be!" thought the youth. "If I were only safely up above once more, I would run away from the whole pack of them," thought he, but he said nothing. He went along with the procession as well as he could; at times he had to crawl, at others he had to stoop, for the way was very narrow. But when it grew better, he walked in advance, and looked about to see how he might most easily steal away and make off. And then he suddenly heard a clear, beautiful voice behind him say: "Now the road is good! Come, sweetheart, and get into the coach!"

The youth turned around quickly, and was so astonished that his nose and ears nearly fell off. There stood a magnificent coach with six white horses, and in the coach sat a maiden as fair and beautiful as the sun, and about her were sitting others, as bright and kindly as the stars. It was

a princess and her playmates, who had all been enchanted together. But now they were delivered, because he had come down to them, and had never contradicted.

"Come along now!" said the princess. Then the youth got into the coach, and drove to church with her. And when they drove away from the church, the princess said: "Now we will first drive to my home, and then we will send for your mother."

"That's all very fine," thought the youth—he said nothing, but he thought it would be better, after all, to drive to his home, instead of down into the hideous rat-hole. But suddenly they came to a beautiful castle, and there they turned in, for there it was they were to live. And at once a fine coach with six horses was sent for the youth's mother, and when she came the wedding festivities began. They celebrated for fourteen days, and perhaps they are celebrating yet. We must hurry, and perhaps we may still get there in time, and can drink the groom's health and dance with the bride!

NOTE

Told with much charm and wealth of detail is the story of "The Youth Who Wanted to Win the Daughter of the Mother in the Corner" (Asbjörnsen, N.F.E., No. 77, p. 73). It is another tale of a deliverance from enchantment, and the conditions are silence and lack of contradiction on the part of the deliverer.

XXXV

THE CHRONICLE OF THE PANCAKE

ONCE upon a time there was a woman who had seven hungry children, and she was baking pancakes for them. There was dough made with new milk, and it lay in the pan, and was rising so plumply and comfortably, that it was a pleasure to watch it. The children stood around it, and their grandfather sat and looked on.

"Give me a little bit of pancake, mother, I'm so hungry!" said one of the children.

"Dear mother!" said the second.

"Dear, sweet mother!" said the third.

"Dear, sweet, good mother!" said the fourth.

"Dear, best, sweet, good mother!" said the fifth.

"Dear, best, sweet, good, dearest mother!" said the sixth.

"Dear, best, sweet, good, dearest, sweetest mother!" said the seventh, and so they all begged around the pancake, one more sweetly than the other, for they were all so hungry and so well-behaved.

"Yes, children, wait until it turns around," said she—until I have turned it around, she should have said—"then you shall all have a pancake, a lovely best-milk pancake. Just see how fat and comfortable it is lying there!"

"'HEY THERE!' THE WOMAN WAS AFTER IT WITH THE PAN IN ONE HAND AND THE SPOON IN THE OTHER."

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When the pancake heard that it was frightened, turned itself around suddenly, and wanted to get out of the pan; but it only fell on its other side, and when this had baked a little, so that it took shape and grew firmer, it leaped out on the floor, and rolled off like a wheel, out of the door, and down the street.

Hey there! The woman was after it with the pan in one hand, and the spoon in the other, as fast as she could, and after her came the children, and last of all, their grandfather came hobbling along.

"Will you wait! Halt! Catch it! Hold it!" they all cried together, and wanted to catch up with it and grab it on the run; but the pancake rolled and rolled, and sure enough, it got so far ahead of them that they could no longer see it, for it had nimbler legs than all of them. After it had rolled a while it met a man.

"Good-day, pancake," said the man.

"Good-day, Man Tan," said the pancake.

"Dear, good pancake, don't roll so fast; but wait a little and let me eat you!" said the man.

"Mother Gray and grandpa I've left behind, and the seven squallers, too, you'll find, so I think I can leave you as well, Man Tan!" said the pancake, and rolled and rolled until it met a hen.

"Good-day, pancake," said the hen.

"Good-day, Hen Glen," said the pancake.

"Dear, good pancake, don't roll so fast, wait a little and I will eat you up!" said the hen.

"Mother Gray and grandpa I've left behind, and

the seven squallers, too, you'll find, and Man Tan, so I think I can leave you as well, Hen Glen!" said the pancake, and rolled along the road like a wheel. Then it met a rooster.

"Good-day, pancake," said the rooster.

"Good-day, Rooster Booster," said the pancake.

"Dear, good pancake, don't roll so fast. Wait a little and I will eat you up!" said the rooster.

"Mother Gray and grandpa I've left behind, and the seven squallers, too, you'll find, and Man Tan and Hen Glen, and so I think I can leave you as well, Rooster Booster," said the pancake, and rolled and rolled as fast as ever it could. And after it had rolled a long time it met a duck.

"Good-day, pancake," said the duck.

"Good-day, Duck Tuck," said the pancake.

"Dear, good pancake, don't roll so fast. Wait a little and I will eat you up!" said the duck.

"Mother Gray and grandpa I've left behind, and the seven squallers, too, you'll find, and Man Tan, and Hen Glen and Rooster Booster, so I think I can leave you as well," said the pancake, and rolled on as fast as ever it could. After it had rolled a long, long time, it met a goose.

"Good-day, pancake," said the goose.

"Good-day, Goose Loose," said the pancake.

"Dear, good pancake, don't roll so fast. Wait a little and I will eat you up!" said the goose.

"Mother Gray and grandpa I've left behind, and the seven squallers, too, you'll find, and Man Tan

and Hen Glen and Rooster Booster and Duck Tuck, and I think I can leave you as well, Goose Loose," said the pancake, and rolled away.

After it had again rolled for a long, long time, it met a gander.

"Good-day, pancake," said the gander.

"Good-day, Gander Meander," said the pancake.

"Dear, good pancake, don't roll so fast. Wait a little and I will eat you up!" said the gander.

"Mother Gray and grandpa I've left behind, and the seven squallers, too, you'll find, and Man Tan and Hen Glen and Rooster Booster and Duck Tuck and Goose Loose, and I think I can leave you as well, Gander Meander," said the pancake, and began to roll as fast as ever it could.

After it had rolled a long, long time, it met a pig.

"Good-day, pancake," said the pig.

"Good-day, Pig Snig," said the pancake, and began to roll as fast as ever it could.

"Now wait a little," said the pig. "You need not hurry so, for we can keep each other company going through the forest and take our time, for it is said to be haunted." The pancake thought that such was quite apt to be the case, and so they started off; but after they had gone a while they came to a brook.

The pig swam across on his own bacon, which was easy enough; but the pancake could not get across.

"Sit down on my snout," said the pig, "and I will carry you over that way." The pancake did so.

"Uff, uff!" said the pig, and swallowed the pancake in one mouthful.

"And now, since the pancake no further goes,
This little chronicle comes to a close."

NOTE

"The Chronicle of the Pancake" (Asbjörnsen, N.F.E., No. 104, p. 233. From Sell, Froen and Faaberg) is a merry, harmless, nursery tale, belonging to the type of "The House That Jack Built," in an accumulation of repeated sentences and characteristic names.

XXXVI

SORIA-MORIA CASTLE

ONCE upon a time there was a couple who had an only son named Halvor. While he was still but a little lad, he would do nothing at all; but was always sitting at the hearth, digging in the ashes. His parents apprenticed him here and apprenticed him there, to be taught something, but Halvor never stayed. When he had been anywhere for a few days, he ran away again, went back home, sat down at the hearth, and dug in the ashes. But once a master mariner came along and asked whether Halvor would not like to go with him, and sail the seas, and see foreign lands. Indeed, Halvor would like to do so very much, and it did not take him long to make up his mind.

How long they sailed the seas I do not know, but suddenly a powerful storm arose, and when it had passed, and all had grown quiet once more, they did not know where they were. They had been driven off their course to a foreign shore, which none among them recognized.

And then, since not a breeze was stirring, they lay there, and Halvor begged the master mariner for permission to go ashore, and look around, for he would rather do that than lie down and sleep. "Do you think you are fit to appear before people?" asked

the master mariner. "The only clothes you have are the rags in which you stand and walk!" Yet Halvor insisted, and finally he was given permission. But he was to come back when the wind blew up. Halvor went, and it was a fair land. No matter where he came, there were great plains, with fields and pastures; but he saw no people at all. The wind blew up again, but Halvor decided that he had not yet seen enough, and wanted to go a little further, and see whether there were no people to be found at all. After a time he came to a great highway, which was so even one could have rolled an egg along it with ease. Halvor went on along this highway, and as evening drew near, he saw a great castle in the distance, that shone afar. Since he had been wandering all day long, without much in the way of food, he had a fine appetite; but the nearer he came to the castle, the more frightened he grew.

In the castle there was a fire on the hearth, and Halvor went into the kitchen, which was beautiful. The kitchenware was all of silver and gold; but there were no human beings to be seen. After Halvor had waited a while, and no one came out, he went and opened a door. There he saw a princess sitting and spinning. "Alas, no!" cried she. "Has a Christian soul really come here! But it would be best for you to go again, if you do not want the troll to swallow you; for a troll with three heads lives here."

"And though he had four, I should like to see him," said the youth. "And I am not going away, for I have done no wrong. But you must give me

something to eat, for I am terribly hungry." When Halvor had eaten his fill, the princess told him to try and see whether he could swing the sword that hung on the wall. But he could not swing it, nor even raise it. "Well," said the princess, "you must take a swallow from the bottle that hangs beside it, for that is what the troll does when he wants to use the sword." Halvor took the swallow, and then could swing the sword at once as though it were nothing at all. Now, thought he, the troll could just come along any time. And sure enough, he did come along, roaring. Halvor placed himself behind the door. "Hu! it smells like Christian blood here!" said the troll, and poked his head in through the door. "Yes, you shall find out it is here and at once," cried Halvor, and hewed off all his heads. The princess was filled with joy at her deliverance, and danced and sang. But then she happened to think of her sisters, and said: "If only my sisters could also be delivered!" "Where are they?" asked Halvor. So she told him that one of them had been carried off by a troll to a castle six miles further away, and the other to a castle that lay nine miles away from the other.

"But now," said she, "you must first help me get this body out." Halvor was very strong, so he quickly cleared everything out, cleaned up, and put all in order. Then they ate, and the following morning he started off at dawn. He did not rest for a moment, but wandered all day long. When he spied the castle, he once more felt a little afraid; it was

even handsomer than the other one; but here, too, there was not a human being to be seen. Then Halvor went into the kitchen, yet did not stop at all, but stepped right into the next room. "No, it cannot be possible that a Christian should venture here!" cried the princess. "I do not know how long I have been here; but during all that time I have not seen a single Christian soul. It would probably be best if you went away quickly; for a troll with six heads lives here." "No, I am not going," said Halvor, "not even if he had six heads more." "He will seize you and swallow you alive!" said the princess. But that made no difference, Halvor would not go, and he did not fear the troll. But he would have to eat and drink, for he was hungry and thirsty after his long tramp. He had as much as he wanted; and then the princess wanted to send him away again. "No," cried Halvor, "I am not going. I have done no wrong, and need not fear any one."

"That will not worry the troll," said the princess. "He will seize you without any questions asked. Yet, if you positively will not go, why, try and see whether you can swing the sword that the troll uses in war." He could not swing it; but then the princess told him to take a swallow from the bottle that hung beside it, and when he had done so he could swing the sword. Suddenly the troll came, and he was so large and so fat that he had to move sideways in order to get through the door. When he had thrust in his first head, he cried: "Huhu! I smell the blood of a Christian!" And that very mo-

ment Halvor hewed off his first head, and then all the rest. The princess was pleased beyond measure; but then she happened to think of her sisters, and she wished that they also might be delivered. Halvor thought this might be done, and wanted to start out at once. But first he had to help the princess get the dead troll out of the way and then, the following morning, he set out. It was a long way to the castle, and he hurried and ran in order to get there in good time. Toward evening he spied the castle, and it was much handsomer than both the others. This time he felt hardly any fear at all; but went through the kitchen and right on in. There sat a princess who was extraordinarily beautiful. Like the others, she said that no Christian soul had ever come to the castle since she had been there, and told him to go away again, as otherwise the troll would swallow him alive, for he had nine heads. "And though he had nine more, and nine on top of those, I will not go," said Halvor, and stood by the stove. The princess earnestly begged him to go, so that the troll would not devour him, but Halvor said: "Let him come whenever he wishes!" Then she gave him the troll sword, and told him to take a swallow from the bottle, so that he could swing it.

Suddenly the troll came roaring along. He was even larger and more powerful than both the others, and he also had to squeeze himself in at the door sideways. "Hu! I smell the blood of a Christian!" That very moment Halvor hewed off his first head, and then all of the others; but the last clung to life

most toughly, and it cost Halvor a good deal of trouble to cut it off, though he found himself so very strong.

Now all the princesses met at the castle, and were happy as they never had been before, in all their lives, and they fell in love with Halvor and he with them, and he was to choose the one whom he loved best; but it was the youngest who loved him the most of all. Yet Halvor acted strangely, and grew quite silent and uncommunicative; so the princess asked him what he was longing for, and whether he did not enjoy being with them. Yes, he enjoyed it very much, for they had enough to live on, and he was well enough off, but yet he was homesick, for his parents were still living, and he would like to see them again. That could easily be arranged, said the princess. "You shall go and return without harm, if you will follow our advice." Indeed, and he would surely do nothing against their wishes, said Halvor. Then they dressed him up until he looked as handsome as a king's son, and put a ring on his finger that made it possible for the one wearing it to wish himself away, and back again. But he must not throw the ring away, and he must not mention their names, said the princesses, otherwise its power would be gone, all their joy would come to an end, and he would never see them again.

"I wish I might be back at the house at home!" said Halvor, and his wish was at once realized, and he was standing in front of his parents' house before he knew it. It was dusk, and when the old

folk saw such a handsome, well-dressed stranger coming, it embarrassed them so that it seemed as though their bowing and scraping would never end. Halvor now asked them whether they could not give him a night's lodging. "No, they really could not do so, for they were quite unprepared for it," said they, "and we are lacking one thing, and another, which such a distinguished gentleman would wish to have. It would be best if the gentleman went up to the castle, whose chimney he can see from here, where the folk are well prepared." "No," said Halvor, "I'll not go there until to-morrow morning. And now let me stay here overnight. I will be content to sit by the hearth." The old folk could make no objection to this, and so Halvor sat down by the hearth, and began to dig in the ashes, as he used to when he was the lazybones at home. Then they chatted about all sorts of matters, and told Halvor about one thing and another, and finally he asked them whether they had no children. Yes, they had a son; but did not know whither he had wandered, or even whether he were still alive, or already dead.

"Could I not be this Halvor?" said Halvor.

"No, I am quite sure you could not," said the woman, starting up. "Halvor was so slow and lazy, and never wanted to do anything, and beside, he was so tattered that one rag got in the way of the other. He could never have turned into so fine a looking gentleman as yourself."

After a time the woman had to go to the hearth, and rake the fire, and as the firelight fell on Halvor,

just as it used to when he dug in the ashes, she recognized him.

"No, can it really be you, Halvor?" she cried, and then the two old folk were happy beyond all power of words, and Halvor had to tell all that had happened to him, while his mother was so pleased with him, that she wanted to take him up to the castle at once, and show him to the girls who had always been so proud, and had turned up their noses at her son. So she went first and Halvor followed. When they came up, she told how Halvor had come back, and that they ought to see how fine he looked, just like a prince, said she. "We can imagine that," said the girls, and tossed their heads. "He is probably the same ragged fellow that he used to be." At that moment Halvor stepped in, and then the girls were so embarrassed that they ran out of the house without their caps. And when they came in again, they were so ashamed that they did not venture to look at Halvor, whom they had always treated with such scorn and contempt. "Well, you always acted as though you were so fine and handsome that no one on earth could compare with you. But you ought to see the oldest princess, whom I delivered," said Halvor. "Compared to her you look like dairymaids, and the middle princess is still handsomer; while the youngest princess, who is my sweetheart, is more beautiful than the sun and moon. Would to God she were here, so that you might see her!" said Halvor.

No sooner had he finished speaking than there they

stood; but then he was very much upset, for now he remembered what they had told him.

At the castle they gave a great feast in honor of the princesses, and made a great deal of them. But they would not stay. "We want to go to your parents," they said to Halvor, "and then we want to go out and look around." He went with them, and they came to a big sheet of water beyond the court-yard. Close beside it was a fair green hill, and there the princesses decided to sit and rest a while, "for it was so pleasant to look out over the water," said they. They sat down, and after they had rested a while, the youngest princess said: "Let me stroke your hair a little, Halvor!" Halvor laid his head in her lap, and she stroked his hair, and before very long Halvor fell asleep. Then she drew the ring from his finger, and gave him another in place of it, and said: "All hold on to me—I wish we were in Soria-Moria Castle!"

When Halvor woke up he saw very well that he had lost the princesses, and began to weep and wail, and was so beside himself with despair that no one could comfort him. And no matter how hard his parents begged him, he would not stay at home, but bade them farewell, and said that he would probably never see them again, for if he did not find his princesses, then it would not be worth his while to go on living.

He still had three hundred dollars, and these he put in his pocket and started out. After he had gone a while he met a man with a nice-looking horse. He

decided to buy it, and began to talk with the man. "It is true I did not intend to sell the horse," said the man, "but perhaps we can come to an understanding." Halvor asked him what he wanted for it. "I did not pay much for it, nor is it worth very much: it is a good saddle horse, but as a draft horse it does not amount to much. Yet it could carry you and your knapsack without difficulty, if you were to walk a bit from time to time," said the man. At last they agreed on the price, and Halvor slung his knapsack across the horse, and from time to time he walked, and then he rode again. Toward evening he came to a green hill on which stood a large tree, beneath which he seated himself. He turned the horse loose, yet did not lie down to sleep, but took out his knapsack instead. When day came he wandered on again, for it seemed to him as though there were no place in which he could rest. He walked and rode all day long through a great forest, in which were many green clearings, that shimmered cheerfully among the trees. He did not know where he was, nor did he know whither he was going; but he allowed himself no more time to rest than his horse needed to feed in one of the green clearings, and himself to eat from his knapsack. He walked and rode, on and on, and thought the forest would never end.

But on the evening of the following day he saw something gleaming among the trees. "If the people there are still up, I could warm myself a little, and get something to eat!" thought Halvor. When he

got there it was a wretched little hut, and through the window he saw an old couple sitting in it, as ancient and gray-headed as doves, and the woman had so long a nose that she used it at the hearth for a poker. "Good evening! Good evening!" said the old woman. "But what are you doing here? No Christian soul has come this way for the past hundred years." Halvor told her he was looking for Soria-Moria Castle, and asked whether she knew the way to it. "No," was the woman's answer, "I do not know, but here comes the moon, I will ask him. He ought to know, for he shines on everything." And then, when the moon rose bright and clear above the tree-tops, the woman went out. "You moon, you moon," she cried, "can you tell me the way to Soria-Moria Castle?" "No," said the moon, "I cannot do that, because when I was shining there, a cloud lay in my way."

"Just wait a little while," said the old woman to Halvor. "The West Wind will be right along, and he is sure to know, for he sweeps and blows about in every corner. Well, I declare, you have a horse, too!" said the old woman when she came in again. "Now don't let the poor beast stand by the door there and starve to death; but take it out to the pasture instead. Or would you like to change with me? We have a pair of old boots, that carry you twelve miles further with every step. I will give them to you in exchange for the horse, and then you will reach Soria-Moria Castle more quickly." Halvor at once agreed, and the old woman was so pleased with

the horse, that she almost started dancing then and there. "For now I can ride to church, too," said she.

Halvor was very restless, and wanted to go right on again, but the woman said there was no need to hurry. "Lie down on the bench by the stove, and take a nap, for we have no bed for you," said she. "I will watch for the West Wind's coming."

All of a sudden the West Wind came rushing along so that the walls creaked. The woman ran out: "You West Wind! You West Wind! Can you tell me the way to Soria-Moria Castle? There is a fellow here who wants to know." "Yes, indeed," said the West Wind, "I have to go to that very place, and dry the wash for the wedding soon to be held. If he is quick afoot, he may come along with me." Halvor ran out. "You must hurry if you are going with me," said the West Wind; and at once he was up and off over hill and dale, land and sea, so that Halvor could hardly keep up with him. "Now I have no more time to keep you company," said the West Wind, "because I have first to tear down a stretch of pine forest, before I come to the bleaching-field and dry the wash. But if you keep going along the hills, you will meet some girls standing there and washing, and then you will not be far from Soria-Moria Castle."

After a time Halvor came to the girls who were washing, and they asked him whether he had seen anything of the West Wind, who was to come and dry the clothes for the wedding. "Yes," said Hal-

vor. "He is only tearing down a stretch of pine forest, and will soon be here," and then he asked the way to Soria-Moria Castle. They showed it to him, and when he reached the castle it was fairly alive with men and horses. But Halvor was so tattered and torn because he had followed the West Wind over stick and stone, and through thick and thin, that he kept to one side, and could not come forward until the last day of the feast. Then all the folk, as was the custom, had to drink the health of the bride and groom, and the cupbearer had to pledge all of them in turn, knights and serving-men. So at length they came to Halvor. Halvor drank the health, and then let the ring which the princess had put on his finger when he lay by the water fall into the glass, and told the cupbearer to greet the bride, and bring her the ring. And the princess at once rose from the table. "Who do you think has first claim to the hand of one of us," she asked, "the man who delivered us, or the one who now sits here in the bridegroom's place?" There was only one opinion as to that, and when Halvor heard it, he did not delay, but cast off his rags and dressed himself as a bridegroom. "Yes, he is the right one!" cried the youngest princess when she caught sight of him, and she drove the other one away, and celebrated her wedding with Halvor.

NOTE

The "Soria-Moria Castle" (Asbjörnsen and Moe, N.F.E., No. 27, p. 115) occurs in Ibsen's Per Gynt as a fabled fairy-palace. The

hero cannot hold his tongue at the right time, and as a result loses the princess for whom he had so strenuously fought. The recognition of Halvor by his mother by the flickering light of the hearth-fire, in whose ashes Halvor was always digging when a boy, is touchingly told.

XXXVII

THE PLAYER ON THE JEW'S-HARP

SOME two or three generations ago, a three-year-old ox, belonging to some people who lived in an alpine meadow in Westfjall, disappeared. And look for him as they would, they could not find him, and in the fall they moved down into the valley again. But while the grandmother was skimming the cream from the milk-pans in the lean-to the day before their departure, and the oldest maid in the hut was scooping the cheese out of the big kettle, a little shepherd girl came running up, and called out that the big ox was standing at the salt-lick, and licking the salt. When the mother stepped out for a moment, she saw nothing that looked at all like an ox. So she thought the little girl had probably been mistaken; but the little one insisted that the big ox had been there.

"I saw the white spot he had on his forehead, and he had broken off one of his horns," said she. The man himself and his two sons were each out searching in a different direction, and they searched and searched; but all three came back at evening, and none of them had found anything. When they heard the little girl's story, one of the sons flung himself on his horse, and rode home at full gallop, in order to fetch his gun; loaded it with small splinters from

a steel arrow, hurried back posthaste, and shot it off cross-wise over the salt-lick. "If the ox is bewitched, he ought to appear now," said he. But it was of no use, the ox was gone and he stayed gone.

The oldest son was to go up on the hill once more, and take a good look all around. And he searched in every direction, far and near, until he thought he could smell the ox; yet in spite of this, he could see no sign of a living being anywhere, all day long. Finally he grew angry, and swore that for his part, the bewitched beast might go to the end of the world; if he did not want to join the rest of the herd, he could please himself. With that he turned around, and went to the herdsman's hut as fast as he could, meaning to take home with him the bear he had shot.

And there, at the fence of the herdsman's hut, stood the great ox licking salt. And one of his horns had been broken off. Where he had been knocking about so long he himself probably knew, the young fellow did not.

But now day was so nearly over that he could just about reach home if he went as he was, and hurried as fast as he could. But if he had to lead and pull along the ox besides, it would have been pitch-dark before he had fairly started. And let me tell you, the fall nights are really dark, and cold besides, and it is not wise to camp under the open sky in the mountains. For this reason he decided to wait until morning, though a night at the herdsman's hut would be bleak and lonely. So he chopped a good armful of birch-boughs, laid them on the hearth, and

soon the hut grew warm and comfortable, and as bright as a room lit with Christmas candles. When he had eaten his supper, he threw himself down on the bed of planks, pulled his jew's-harp out of his waistcoat pocket, and began to play the "Bells of St. Thomas" round. But he had not been playing long before he fell asleep, with the instrument in his mouth. Suddenly he woke again, and it seemed to him that he could hear something rustling softly at the other end of the hut. He turned his head slightly, and saw a beautiful young girl standing by the table, braiding her hair. It was so long that it fell down over her hips, and as lovely and shiny as though it had been gilded. At first the young fellow could not see her face, but once, when she happened to turn in his direction, it seemed to him that she was the fairest and finest-looking maiden he had ever laid eyes on. Her like could not have been found far or near, and he knew every girl in the parish, well-to-do or otherwise. The young fellow did not dare address her, for she thought herself alone, and looked so dear and trustful that he dreaded frightening her away. So he lay there as still as a mouse, and did not venture to move so much as a foot.

Suddenly in came another girl; but she appeared to be coarser, and had a large mouth and dark complexion, not as clear and fresh as that of the first girl; and she did not please him as well. Both were dressed alike, in green jackets and bodices of red satin, blue stockings, and with bright silver buckles

on their shoes. The younger maiden had white sleeves, that were so fresh and clean they fairly shone. Her bodice was cut low, and showed a handsome round clasp, which tinkled delicately whenever the maiden made the slightest move. And now the young fellow realized what sort of maidens these were, and could not get over his astonishment that there were such beautiful women among the underground folk. It was Saturday evening, and this was probably the reason they were dressing and adorning themselves so busily: no doubt they were expecting company or suitors. The young fellow could not make out what they said to each other, for they whispered so softly that he only caught a word now and then. Once they spoke of a little white lamb that had gone lame that day.

"Yes, it is the fault of that young fellow who has been rushing around in all the empty huts among the hills, looking for his fire-red ox. I saw him throw a stone at the little lamb," said the older girl, the one with the large mouth and dark skin. "He really should be punished for that!" said she.

"Yes, but he never knew it was a lamb," replied the younger one, the beauty with the red cheeks. "And it was not right of grandmother to hide his ox, and make him hunt for it far and near."

"He might have taken his ox, for it was standing just beside the hut, and he ran right past it," said the other girl.

"Yes, but you know he took it to be a rat," the younger one answered.

"O, how stupid those people are," said the older one again, and laughed until she shook. "They pretend to be wiser than wise, and cannot even tell a fire-red ox from a rat! Ha, ha, ha!" and she laughed so heartily that her sister was also carried away, and the young fellow himself could not help but smile a bit.

After a time he began to play a boisterous dance-tune. And what a fright it gave the girls! They screamed, ran off helter-skelter in their terror, and were gone in a flash. But the young fellow kept on playing. After a little while one of them thrust in her head at the door, and when they saw what had frightened them so, they began to whisper and giggle outside, in front of the hut. And after a time they ventured in again, and began to dance to the music. And those girls could really swing around and use their legs. They almost flew over the uneven floor, and were so sure of the time that every step they took was in place.

When they had danced a while, and the young fellow had made their acquaintance—or thought that he had—he unclasped his belt, and passing it around the handsomer of the two, drew her to him. And she allowed him to do so. This angered the young fellow, for he would not have believed that so dainty and lovely a girl would have allowed him to act so familiarly on such short acquaintance. And as though by chance, he let go one end of his belt and swish!—off she was. Her sister ran after her, and slammed the door behind her.

Now the young fellow was angry with himself because he had been angry with her. But he thought he was probably not worthy of obtaining the hand of so fair and loveable a maiden, for there is an old saw to the effect that none may escape their fate. Finally he thought that perhaps he could coax her back again with his music, and he played one tune after another, the most beautiful ones he knew. But the *huldra* maidens did not appear again. At last his hands and mouth grew so tired that he had to stop. And then he happened to think of "The Blue Melody," which a minstrel from his part of the country had learned in ancient times from the underground folk. No sooner had he commenced it than both girls came sweeping in once more.

"You play beautifully, you do!" said the younger.

"One has to play beautifully when one has such beautiful listeners," returned the young fellow.

"Yes, that's what the cat said when she caught a mouse," laughed the maiden.

"Come here, and I will teach you 'The Blue Melody'!" said he. So they came to him, and watched while he played. After a time the younger one put her hand in his waistcoat pocket.

"And what is that, is it liquorice?" she asked, as she pulled out a roll of tobacco.

"Yes, try it!" the young fellow answered. She bit off a little piece, but spat it right out on the floor again.

"Yes, it is liquorice that bites," said she, and she wiped her tongue on her sleeve.

"Is it really so biting?" asked the other one, and also wanted to try it. So the young fellow gave her some as well, and she had the same experience. They never wanted to taste such liquorice again in their lives, so they assured him.

"Well, I can tell you how to get good liquorice," said the one. "You must boil the root of a plant called merilian, and you must pour the water into juniper-berry juice, and then you will have a liquorice that is so sweet and good that it will even cure a toothache." The young fellow said he would try it, some time, when he had found the plant.

Toward evening the girls wanted to leave. Yet that drove him to despair, and he begged them to stay for a little while. But the girls simply would not. Their mother would not allow it, said they. When the young fellow saw that they were really going, he went quite out of his mind. He had grown so very fond of the younger *huldra* maiden, and now he was never to see her again. Without knowing what he did, he threw the jew's-harp at her, and hit her on the head, just as she was passing through the door. And with that she came in again.

"Mother, mother! A Christian has won sister Sireld!" cried the other, out in front of the hut. Soon after a very ancient woman came hobbling and shuffling into the hut. Her face was so wrinkled and dark that her yellow teeth shone out from it, for teeth she had, in spite of her age. "Now you may keep her, since you have won her, for now she is no longer bewitched," said the old woman to the

young fellow. "And if you are kind to her, you shall never lack food or clothing, and you shall have all that you need, both Sundays and workdays. But if you treat her unkindly, you shall pay for it!" said the old woman, and raised her cane as though she were about to use it on the young fellow. Then she hobbled out again.

It seemed to him that he had won a wife very quickly, after all, in this manner, and he asked her how it all came to be.

"The jew's-harp struck my head with such force, that a drop of blood flowed," said the girl, "and it was the best thing you could have done, for I would much rather live with Christians than with the underground folk," said she.

He still thought the world and all of her, and yet it seemed to him as though he could have done nothing worse: all had happened so quickly, and he had nothing on which to marry; but after all, what was done was done. The following morning she went home with him. His family were much surprised to see him come back in such company, and were angry with him, and looked for excuses to find fault with the girl: but there was nothing to object to about her, except that she had yellow teeth, and after all, this was no such great matter. In her dealings with others she was uncommonly amiable, and there was not a girl that went to church who could equal her in beauty.

But after the wedding he gradually began to ill-treat her. For you must know that he could never

forget she was not a Christian. He sulked, and was always angry and ill-natured, and never gave her a kind word. And he refused to grant her least request. Though it might be the merest trifle, he never had more than a short "No" for anything she asked. And in spite of this she was kind and friendly, and acted as though she did not hear his angry words, and was always helpful and amiable. But it made no difference, he grew worse from day to day. And they began to go downhill, for strife in the home drives luck away. At last it seemed as though they would have to take the beggar's bowl and staff, and wander from one farm-stead to another like any other beggars.

One day she did not know what to give the people to eat, for there was not even a crust of bread in the house. And then she grew sad, for all might have been different for them had he but treated her better. He was standing in the smithy at the moment, about to shoe a horse, and she went out to him.

"Won't you build me the pen now, the one I have so often, often asked you for?" she begged. "Do it now, and I will shoe the horse!" And she tore the red-hot horse-shoe from the anvil, and bent it in shape with her bare hands. When he saw that she was mistress of such arts, he grew frightened, and actually built her a fine, big pen back of the stable, set in a post, and drove a hook into it, just as she had said. The following morning the pen filled with fire-red cattle, big, fat, handsome beasts,

that gave a great deal of milk. Such fine cows had never been seen anywhere. And on the hook hung a copper milk-pail, and a pair of horns of salt, with a silver ring from which to hang them. And now it was not long, as you may imagine, before they were more than prosperous at the farm-stead again.

For a time everything went well. He let her work and command in the house, and she had unfailing luck in all she undertook, so that wealth flowed in to them from every side. But at length he once more began to ill-treat her. Wherever he went he remembered that she was no Christian, no matter how kind, and amiable and obedient she might be, and just like any one else, save that she was far, far handsomer. Once he reached down the poker from the wall, and was about to beat her. She jumped up and begged him insistently not to touch her: "For else both of us will be unhappy!" But he would not listen to her, and beat her about the head, until the blood ran over the poker and fell on his hand. And then she suddenly disappeared from his sight. It seemed as though she had floated through the wall, or sunk into the ground. He saw nothing, but he heard a woman sob and weep, very quietly and softly, and painfully, and with a deadly sadness. After a little while all was silent—and then he heard no more. He searched day in, day out, here and there, hither and yon, and his neighbors, too, went along and helped him search; but to no avail, for he did not find her, and could not even discover a trace of her. When he was in the hill pastures dur-

ing the summer, and the rest of the folk were up there as well, and even after they had gone, he would sit night after night, and play "The Blue Melody"; yet he never saw her again, nor any of her folk.

In the summer his little girl was old enough to begin going to school. And one day she said to her father, when he came up to the hills: "I am to bring you a kind greeting from mother!"

"Ah, no, my little girl, is that really the truth? Where did you speak to her?" he asked.

"She and two others came here the day that Guro fetched the sheep, and since then she often comes here," answered the little one, "and they gave me their clasps, too," said she, and showed him three handsome round clasps.

"Won't she come back home to us?" he asked, as well you may imagine.

"She said that she really could not do that, and that she had to protect you continually against folk who wanted to harm you!" said the little one.

Sadness had been his portion before this, and now it did not grow any less. And it was a blessing that before many years had passed the earth closed over him.

NOTE

Touching in its simplicity, and characteristically local is this final fairy-tale of "The Player on the Jew's-Harp" (Bergh, p. 38). In its cheerful beginning, and toward its sad close sounds the magic music of "The Blue Melody," which some one caught from the underground folk in ancient times. From primal days folk-lore has glori-

fied the irresistible power of music as magic of supernatural origin. Horand in the "Hegeling Saga" is credited with having learned this melody on the wild wave, from a water-spirit; and the legend that his compelling art was a gift of the underground folk was even current of the Norwegian fiddler Ole Bull (1880).